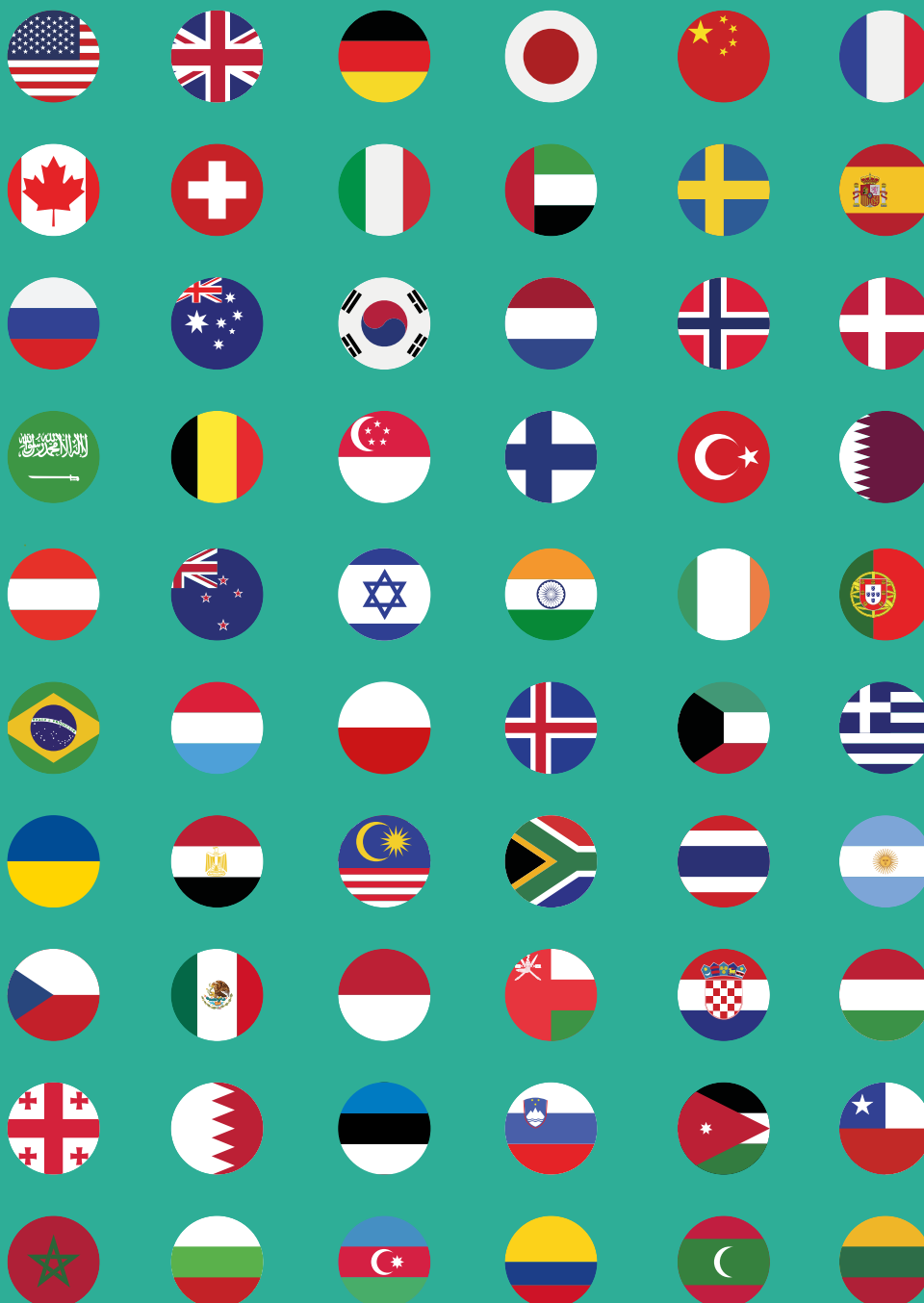




Global Soft Power Index 2023

*The world's most comprehensive research study
on perceptions of nation brands*



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About Brand Finance

Brand Finance is the world’s leading brand evaluation and strategy consultancy.

We bridge the gap between marketing and finance

Brand Finance was set up in 1996 with the aim of 'bridging the gap between marketing and finance'. We have been measuring and advising how to boost nation brands and corporate brands for over 25 years.

We pride ourselves on technical credibility

Brand Finance is a chartered accountancy firm regulated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, and the first brand valuation consultancy to join the International Valuation Standards Council. Our experts helped craft the internationally recognised standards on Brand Valuation – ISO 10668 and Brand Evaluation – ISO 20671.

We quantify the financial value of brands

We put 5,000 of the world’s biggest brands to the test every year. Ranking brands across all sectors and countries, we publish nearly 100 reports annually.

We offer a unique combination of expertise

Our teams have experience across a wide range of disciplines from marketing and market research, to brand strategy and visual identity,

to tax and accounting, to public diplomacy and crisis communications. We understand the importance of sharing a brand’s story to reach business objectives.

We advise governments on how to boost their nation brands

Brand Finance has been conducting an annual Nation Brands study on the world’s most valuable and strongest nation brands for nearly 20 years. It has provided key benchmarks for diplomats, tourism boards, trade agencies, nation brand consultants and managers.

The Global Soft Power Index expands on that methodology to provide an all-round view of perceptions of nation brands. Understanding those perceptions is key for national, regional, city, and corporate brands to achieve success internationally, allowing to identify strengths and weaknesses and to improve growth strategies going forward.

The stronger the nation’s Soft Power, the greater its ability to attract investments, market its products and services, promote tourism, and invite talent. to attract investments and market its products and services.







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Global Soft Power Index 2023

The world's top 121 Soft Power nations, scored out of 100

<div>1← 1</div> <div>UNITED STATES</div> <div>Score 74.8 +4.1</div>	<div>2← 2</div> <div>UNITED KINGDOM</div> <div>Score 67.3 +2.4</div>	<div>3← 3</div> <div>GERMANY</div> <div>Score 65.8 +1.2</div>	<div>4↑ 5</div> <div>JAPAN</div> <div>Score 65.2 +1.7</div>	<div>5↓ 4</div> <div>CHINA</div> <div>Score 65.0 +0.8</div>
<div>6← 6</div> <div>FRANCE</div> <div>Score 62.4 +1.8</div>	<div>7← 7</div> <div>CANADA</div> <div>Score 60.7 +1.2</div>	<div>8← 8</div> <div>SWITZERLAND</div> <div>Score 58.5 +2.0</div>	<div>9↑ 10</div> <div>ITALY</div> <div>Score 56.6 +1.8</div>	<div>10↑ 15</div> <div>UNITED ARAB EMIRATES</div> <div>Score 55.2 +3.2</div>
<div>11↑ 14</div> <div>SWEDEN</div> <div>Score 55.1 +2.8</div>	<div>12↓ 11</div> <div>SPAIN</div> <div>Score 54.9 +1.8</div>	<div>13↓ 9</div> <div>RUSSIA</div> <div>Score 54.8 -1.3</div>	<div>14↓ 13</div> <div>AUSTRALIA</div> <div>Score 54.6 +1.9</div>	<div>15↓ 12</div> <div>SOUTH KOREA</div> <div>Score 53.9 +1.0</div>
<div>16← 16</div> <div>NETHERLANDS</div> <div>Score 53.7 +3.1</div>	<div>17← 17</div> <div>NORWAY</div> <div>Score 52.6 +2.9</div>	<div>18← 18</div> <div>DENMARK</div> <div>Score 51.8 +3.0</div>	<div>19↑ 24</div> <div>SAUDI ARABIA</div> <div>Score 51.3 +4.1</div>	<div>20↓ 19</div> <div>BELGIUM</div> <div>Score 51.2 +2.8</div>
<div>21↓ 20</div> <div>SINGAPORE</div> <div>Score 51.0 +2.6</div>	<div>22↑ 25</div> <div>FINLAND</div> <div>Score 50.7 +3.5</div>	<div>23↓ 22</div> <div>TÜRKIYE</div> <div>Score 50.4 +2.6</div>	<div>24↑ 26</div> <div>QATAR</div> <div>Score 49.9 +4.1</div>	<div>25↑ 27</div> <div>AUSTRIA</div> <div>Score 49.9 +6.5</div>

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<div>31↓ 28</div> <div>BRAZIL</div> <div>Score 46.2 +2.9</div>	<div>32↑ 41</div> <div>LUXEMBOURG</div> <div>Score 45.3 +7.7</div>	<div>33↑ 40</div> <div>POLAND</div> <div>Score 45.1 +6.9</div>	<div>34↑ 37</div> <div>ICELAND</div> <div>Score 44.7 +6.2</div>	<div>35↑ 36</div> <div>KUWAIT</div> <div>Score 44.3 +5.2</div>
<div>36↓ 33</div> <div>GREECE</div> <div>Score 44.3 +3.9</div>	<div>37↑ 51</div> <div>UKRAINE</div> <div>Score 44.3 +10.1</div>	<div>38↓ 31</div> <div>EGYPT</div> <div>Score 43.0 +1.5</div>	<div>39← 39</div> <div>MALAYSIA</div> <div>Score 42.6 +4.1</div>	<div>40↓ 34</div> <div>SOUTH AFRICA</div> <div>Score 42.5 +2.3</div>
<div>41↓ 35</div> <div>THAILAND</div> <div>Score 42.4 +2.2</div>	<div>42↓ 38</div> <div>ARGENTINA</div> <div>Score 42.2 +3.7</div>	<div>43↑ 44</div> <div>CZECHIA</div> <div>Score 42.0 +6.7</div>	<div>44↓ 42</div> <div>MEXICO</div> <div>Score 41.0 +3.4</div>	<div>45↑ 47</div> <div>INDONESIA</div> <div>Score 40.9 +6.2</div>
<div>46↑ 49</div> <div>OMAN</div> <div>Score 40.7 +6.1</div>	<div>47↓ 43</div> <div>CROATIA</div> <div>Score 40.7 +5.3</div>	<div>48↓ 45</div> <div>HUNGARY</div> <div>Score 40.5 +5.3</div>	<div>49↑ 57</div> <div>GEORGIA</div> <div>Score 40.0 +6.6</div>	<div>50↑ 68</div> <div>BAHRAIN</div> <div>Score 40.0 +8.0</div>

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<div>56↑</div> <div>62</div> <div>BULGARIA</div> <div>Score 39.2 +6.3</div>	<div>57↑</div> <div>77</div> <div>AZERBAIJAN</div> <div>Score 39.1 +7.8</div>	<div>58↓</div> <div>48</div> <div>COLOMBIA</div> <div>Score 39.0 +4.2</div>	<div>59↓</div> <div>52</div> <div>MALDIVES</div> <div>Score 38.9 +4.9</div>	<div>60↑</div> <div>87</div> <div>LITHUANIA</div> <div>Score 38.9 +8.8</div>
<div>61↓</div> <div>60</div> <div>PHILIPPINES</div> <div>Score 38.7 +5.4</div>	<div>62↑</div> <div>84</div> <div>SLOVAKIA</div> <div>Score 38.7 +7.7</div>	<div>63↑</div> <div>66</div> <div>URUGUAY</div> <div>Score 38.4 +6.2</div>	<div>64↓</div> <div>50</div> <div>ROMANIA</div> <div>Score 38.4 +4.0</div>	<div>65↑</div> <div>99</div> <div>LATVIA</div> <div>Score 38.4 +9.1</div>
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<div>71↓</div> <div>65</div> <div>MALTA</div> <div>Score 37.5 +5.1</div>	<div>72↓</div> <div>67</div> <div>COSTA RICA</div> <div>Score 37.3 +5.2</div>	<div>73↑</div> <div>78</div> <div>SERBIA</div> <div>Score 36.9 +5.7</div>	<div>74↑</div> <div>90</div> <div>SEYCHELLES</div> <div>Score 36.9 +6.9</div>	<div>75↑</div> <div>80</div> <div>PARAGUAY</div> <div>Score 36.8 +5.7</div>

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<div>76↑</div> <div>82</div> <div>PERU</div> <div>Score 36.8 +5.8</div>	<div>77↓</div> <div>63</div> <div>IRAN</div> <div>Score 36.7 +4.0</div>	<div>78↑</div> <div>97</div> <div>MONTENEGRO</div> <div>Score 36.5 +7.2</div>	<div>79↑</div> <div>88</div> <div>KAZAKHSTAN</div> <div>Score 36.5 +6.4</div>	<div>80↑</div> <div>93</div> <div>BARBADOS</div> <div>Score 36.4 +6.7</div>
<div>81↓</div> <div>61</div> <div>DOMINICAN REPUBLIC</div> <div>Score 36.4 +3.5</div>	<div>82↑</div> <div>92</div> <div>BOLIVIA</div> <div>Score 36.4 +6.5</div>	<div>83↓</div> <div>76</div> <div>TUNISIA</div> <div>Score 36.4 +5.1</div>	<div>84↓</div> <div>83</div> <div>PAKISTAN</div> <div>Score 36.4 +5.4</div>	<div>85↓</div> <div>74</div> <div>RWANDA</div> <div>Score 36.2 +4.8</div>
<div>86↓</div> <div>75</div> <div>ALGERIA</div> <div>Score 36.0 +4.6</div>	<div>87↑</div> <div>96</div> <div>COTE D'IVOIRE</div> <div>Score 35.9 +6.4</div>	<div>88↑</div> <div>113</div> <div>TURKMENISTAN</div> <div>Score 35.8 +8.0</div>	<div>89↑</div> <div>79</div> <div>LEBANON</div> <div>Score 35.8 +4.6</div>	<div>90↑</div> <div>98</div> <div>ECUADOR</div> <div>Score 35.7 +6.4</div>
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<div>111↑ 114</div> <div>ANGOLA</div> <div>Score 34.2 +6.4</div>	<div>112↓ 107</div> <div>ZAMBIA</div> <div>Score 33.9 +5.1</div>	<div>113↓ 108</div> <div>MYANMAR</div> <div>Score 33.9 +5.3</div>	<div>114↑ 117</div> <div>MOZAMBIQUE</div> <div>Score 33.9 +7.4</div>	<div>115↓ 73</div> <div>SRI LANKA</div> <div>Score 33.8 +2.0</div>
<div>116↓ 81</div> <div>IRAQ</div> <div>Score 33.7 +2.7</div>	<div>117↓ 106</div> <div>LAOS</div> <div>Score 33.6 +4.8</div>	<div>118↑ 120</div> <div>TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO</div> <div>Score 33.5 +8.2</div>	<div>119↓ 115</div> <div>UGANDA</div> <div>Score 33.4 +6.0</div>	<div>120↓ 111</div> <div>GUATEMALA</div> <div>Score 33.3 +5.1</div>
<div>121 New</div> <div>ZIMBABWE</div> <div>Score 32.7 New</div>				

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Request your own Soft Power Report

A Soft Power Report provides a full breakdown of your nation brand’s performance in all metrics of the Global Soft Power Index, both on a global level and on a country by country basis. You also gain access to our interactive dashboard where you can explore the scores of all 121 nation brands in the study.

Each report includes expert recommendations for improving your nation brand perceptions and offers a cost-effective way to gaining a better understanding of your position against peers.

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Introduction



David Haigh

Chairman and CEO,
Brand Finance

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected and globalised, the importance of Soft Power in international affairs cannot be overstated. The use of Soft Power has become a critical component of foreign policy for nations around the world, as they seek to build positive relationships with other countries, promote their values and interests, and achieve their strategic objectives through non-coercive means.

This is even more important when some nations use military force to impose their will on other nations.

This annual report into Soft Power covers the ability to influence others through attraction or persuasion rather than coercion. It encompasses a wide range of tools, including business and trade, governance, international relations, culture and heritage, media and communication, education and science, the character of the nation and the promotion of its values.

This year, we are also looking more closely at environmental sustainability. Soft Power enables countries to shape the perceptions and attitudes of other nations, build trust and cooperation, and advance their own interests without resorting to military force.

One of the key advantages of Soft Power is that it allows countries to achieve their goals through peaceful means. In contrast to hard power, which relies on military strength and coercion, Soft Power enables nations to win hearts and minds through dialogue, cultural exchange, and cooperation.

This can be particularly effective in building relationships with countries that may be suspicious or hostile towards one's own nation. By demonstrating goodwill and promoting mutual interests, countries can build trust and create a more stable and peaceful international environment.

Another important aspect of Soft Power is its ability to foster economic development and prosperity. Nations can leverage Soft Power to attract foreign investment, enhance trade, promote tourism, and invite talent. All of those can help create jobs and boost economic growth in both partner countries.

However, Soft Power is not without its challenges and limitations. It requires significant investments in education, culture, and diplomacy, and may not always yield immediate results.

In addition, Soft Power initiatives may be undermined by domestic policies or actions that are perceived as hypocritical or inconsistent with the values being promoted. Moreover, Soft Power may not be sufficient to address certain challenges, such as terrorism, which may require the use of hard power.

Despite these challenges, the importance of Soft Power in international affairs cannot be ignored. In a world where power is increasingly defined by intangible factors such as reputation, influence, and values, Soft Power has become an essential tool for achieving strategic objectives and promoting international cooperation. It is up to policymakers, diplomats, and citizens alike to recognise the potential of Soft Power, and to invest in the tools needed to wield it effectively. Only by embracing Soft Power can we build a more peaceful, prosperous, and just world for ourselves and future generations.

Join us, and many of the world's leading Soft Power experts, as we consider the opportunities and risks ahead.



Foreword



Dr Paul Temporal

Associate Fellow,
Saïd Business School,
University of Oxford

The last year has proved to be a globally volatile one, with the retreat of COVID-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, rising energy prices, and climate-related incidents and concerns.

These trends were reflected in the research underlying the Global Soft Power Index 2023, with the previous COVID-19 pillar being removed and replaced with Sustainable Future measures. Protecting the environment, contributing to global climate action, green energy and technology investments, and sustainable cities and transport all feature. And, interestingly, "invests in space exploration" was added to the Education & Science pillar, an exciting area of expansion and an undeniable source of Soft Power, although this may play into the hands of some of the richer, stronger nation brands. Data was collected from 111,364 people in 101 markets, the largest sample to date.

Brand Finance also assesses the relative strength and financial value of nation brands, alongside Soft Power. This serves to remind us that a nation's brand strength and value are inextricably linked to the effectiveness of its Soft Power. Indeed, it can be argued that the strength and competitiveness of a nation brand is explained in large part through the impact of its Soft Power, and as such, nation brand development and management should use Soft Power data as a part of its portfolio of tools for policy purposes.

With that in mind, it is worth considering some of the key lessons that we may draw from the Index.

First, exercise of hard power overshadows Soft Power, and reputation is an important driver of both nation brand value and Soft Power. Russia's invasion of Ukraine saw its reputation ranking plunge from 23rd to 105th, and the negative effect on its overall ranking caused it to drop out of the top 10.

Second, ordinarily, individual leaders seem to have surprisingly little effect on overall Soft Power indicators. Germany's score survived the departure of Angela Merkel and even the UK has come through The Year of Three Prime Ministers with its ranking relatively unscathed. The notable exception we see this year is Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy. In this case, Ukraine's increased Soft Power is a direct reflection, not only of Zelenskyy's moral leadership within the country, but also of the way that he has deliberately cultivated and amplified his personal Soft Power to gain continued support externally.

Third, history counts. In the UK, despite a succession of political crises and a poor economic recovery from COVID, the country's Soft Power score rose by +2.4. It is possible that the passing of Queen Elizabeth II and associated pageantry reinforced strong associations with aspects of Culture & Heritage while conjuring up a nostalgia for the UK as it was perceived in the past.

Finally, strategy and investment work.

The Gulf nations have seen a boost to their Soft Power this year, partly due to their benefiting economically from the energy crisis, but primarily because of increased involvement in international events.

The UAE entered the top 10 for the first time, based on the success of Expo 2020 Dubai, with COP 28 to look forward to. Despite controversies, Qatar's hosting of the FIFA World Cup has contributed massively to its Familiarity, Reputation, and Influence.

Data on nation branding and Soft Power need to be viewed in totality then, and the tracking of global, competitive perceptions in both areas is of paramount importance. In doing so, every nation needs a brand management structure that has a helicopter view of, and the means to act on, all nation brand and Soft Power initiatives. The greatest brands are the best at managing perceptions and this report is a call to action.



Interview with Dmytro Kuleba - Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.



Dmytro Kuleba
Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Ukraine

Ukraine has risen from 51st to 37th in Brand Finance's Global Soft Power Index 2023. How has Ukraine leveraged the use of media to advance its familiarity and influence as a nation since the beginning of the war?

Ukraine's Global Perception Report for 2022 has clearly shown that Ukraine is no longer a terra incognita. Ukraine's results in the Global Soft Power Index 2023 only reinforce our findings – Ukraine's familiarity and influence have risen dramatically across the globe.

Except for the obvious reason of Ukraine being all over the news, we have made a gargantuan effort to tell Ukraine's story, set the Ukrainian narrative, and mobilise support. Ukraine is quite a blockbuster story. I would call this story "Cinderella turned Captain Marvel".

President Zelenskyy has played a major role. He has become a brave wartime leader, a hero foreigners can relate to.

We have used a set of tools: social media, emotional videos, famous dark humour, frank wartime diplomacy, and others.

Data proves our success. For instance, our digital ecosystem Ukraine.UA has reached over 1.1 billion people in under one year. 71% of people globally took Ukraine's side.

How has Ukraine's cultural diplomacy improved over the last year and what specific measures has the government taken to promote Ukrainian culture abroad?

Since February 24, Ukrainian cultural diplomacy has had to adapt to a new reality. We needed to satisfy the enormous demand for knowledge about Ukraine. Artists, authors, musicians, directors, and actors have been working tirelessly abroad, rallying for Ukraine by culture and art. Foreign Ministry's department of public diplomacy has coordinated hundreds of initiatives and campaigns.

The MFA's Ukrainian Institute – leading Ukraine's cultural diplomacy – launched a number of projects, such as "Postcards from Ukraine", dedicated to the architectural heritage destroyed or damaged in the war.

One major event to highlight was the Carnegie Hall performance of "Shchedryk". This famous Ukrainian melody is well-known around the world as "Carol of the Bells". It was highly symbolic, because the famous Ukrainian masterpiece was first performed at the same venue exactly 100 years ago, when Ukraine fought for its independence in the early 20th century.

In what ways is Ukraine leveraging its experience of the ongoing war to enhance its Soft Power, such as by promoting Ukrainian efforts towards peace and conflict resolution?

We started strengthening our Soft Power muscles years before the full-scale invasion began. So we had the tools in our hands. We have learnt a lot this year and we found new allies.

Ukraine's First Lady Olena Zelenska plays a major role. Back in 2021 she organised the world's first summit of first ladies and gentlemen in Kyiv focused on Soft Power. Olena Zelenska also undertakes foreign visits and appears in the media. She has become a leading figure of Ukraine's Soft Power.

The second summit in 2022 was related to the topic you mentioned: How to restore Ukraine's human potential so severely damaged by war.

Ukraine.UA is currently running a campaign called "What we are fighting for". One of its main goals is to promote elements of President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula. Soft Power and creative communications are crucial to explain our diplomatic efforts to the world.



01 Methodology

How did we survey perceptions of nation brands?

- Defining Soft Power
- Consulting the experts
- The 8 Soft Power Pillars
- Constructing the Index
- The General Public Methodology
- Conducting over 100,000 interviews across more than 100 markets

Definitions of Soft Power

What is Soft Power?

World leaders, global corporate brands, civil society, entrepreneurs, academics, journalists and thinkers are endlessly attempting to make sense of the concept of power. Is it a dominant force exerted upon smaller entities? Is it the art of coaxing another around to your way of thinking?

When we look at nations around the world and their leadership through the lens of power, there are a variety of terms that can be applied to government policies and overall national influence: hard power, Soft Power, sticky power, old power, and new power.

The concept of Soft Power was first introduced by Joseph Nye in 1990 who argued that there is an alternative method of foreign policy for states to win the support of others; rather than the traditional hard power method, which involves using military and economic means as the primary method of achieving its goals.

Power is, not simply the “the ability or right to control people or things”, but crucially it is also the possession of influence over others and the “ability to act or produce an effect”.

Ultimately, Soft Power is the ability to convert states rather than coerce them, or simply “getting others to want what you want”, which is achieved by proving your shared values and norms.

This emphasis may have been relevant in the past, when states were reliant on taxable revenue and large armies were necessary to win wars – both of which are dependent on the size of the state’s population.

This is no longer the case, as “the definition of power is losing its emphasis on military force” and “technology, education and economic growth are becoming more significant in international power”.

The strength of a nation in bringing others on-side can be said to rest broadly upon

institutions, and rule of law. By proving the development of a nation’s domestic strength, it is able to further its influence and legitimise its role as an international player.

Socialising accepted norms and values is also a large part of a nation’s effort to build its Soft Power reserve – a bank of influence created to affect the foreign policy of other states. This is because states, like humans, are more likely to trust those with whom they share common ideals.

It is with this in mind that we have carved our in-house definition of Soft Power:

A nation’s ability to influence the preferences and behaviours of various actors in the international arena (states, corporations, communities, publics etc.) through attraction or persuasion rather than coercion.

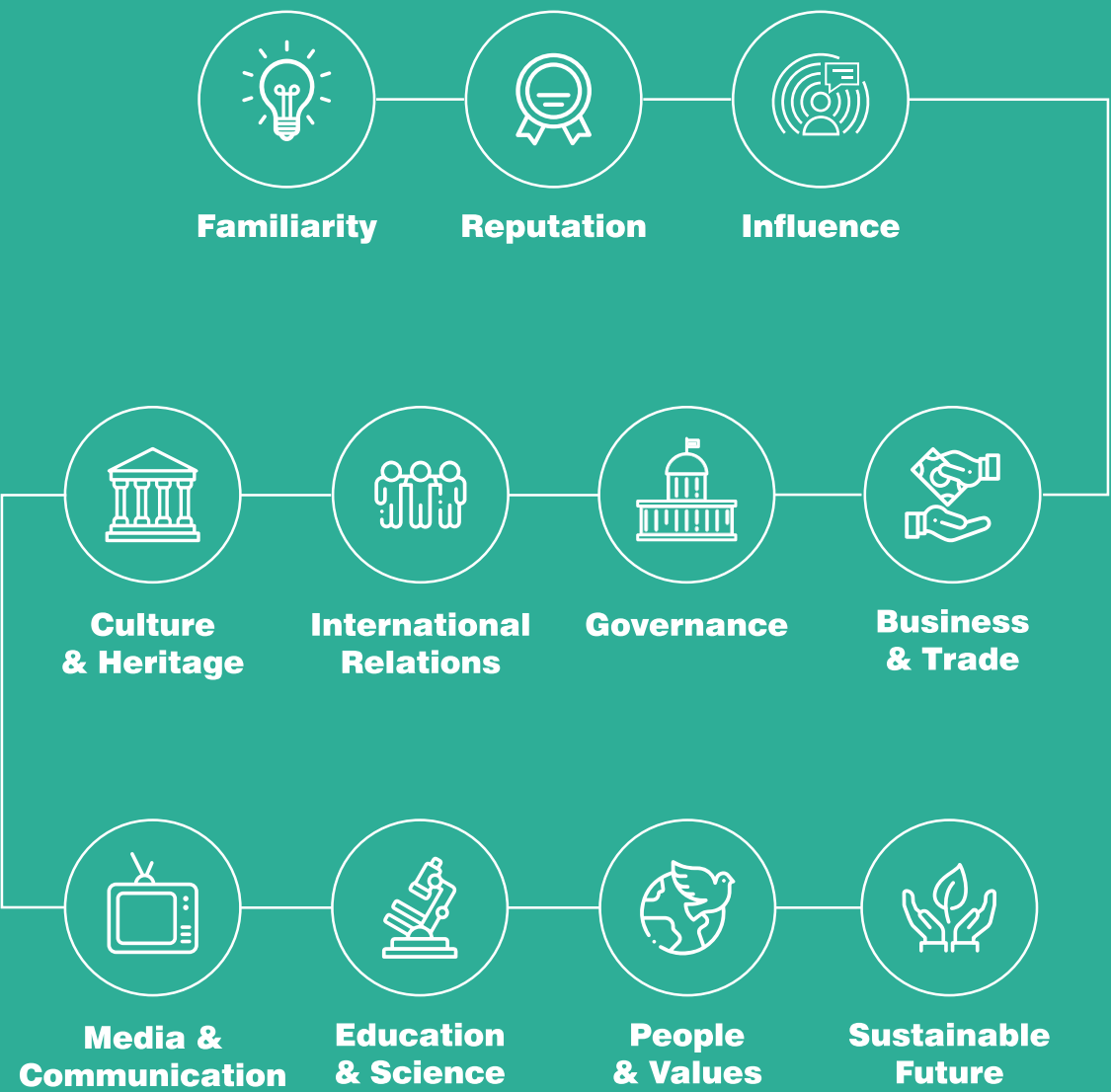
Expert consultation

We started with a deep dive review of existing Soft Power surveys, indices, and frameworks, followed by a series of expert consultation interviews with Soft Power practitioners and researchers.

We have undertaken four rounds of expert consultations over the last four years, conducting qualitative interviews with over 50 practitioners and researchers of Soft Power worldwide and across several categories: academics, think-tank analysts, journalists, diplomats, nation brand managers, consultants, business leaders, artists and sportspeople.

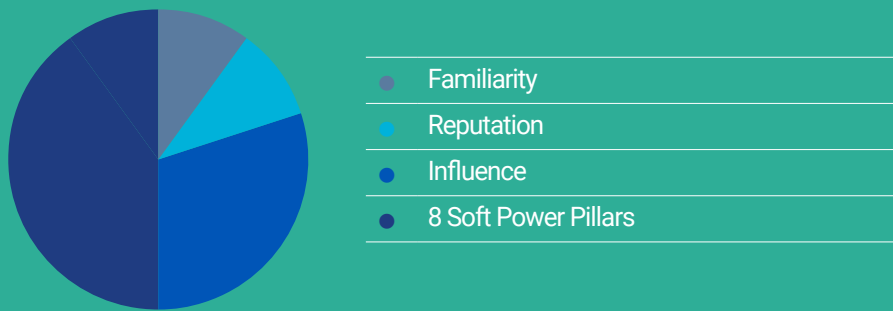
The purpose of the expert consultation and perception audit was to establish how Soft Power is viewed by its key stakeholders.





Global Soft Power Index Weightings

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Following this Soft Power deep dive, we were able to build our own definition of Soft Power, carve out our 8 Soft Power Pillars and then form the building blocks of Soft Power and our ultimate Index structure.

Definitions, definitions

To date, the concept of Soft Power has undergone a critical analysis by a wide range of academics, journalists, think tanks, politicians, diplomats, and consultancies. By virtue of that, there are differing definitions of Soft Power and it is easy to fall into the trap of comparing apples with oranges. We started our analysis by clearly defining and conceptualising Soft Power to avoid any confusion and to ensure relevance of our study to a range of stakeholders.

Country? Nation? State?

Part of the confusion comes from using different terms for the actors that exercise Soft Power on the international stage. We have decided to refer to ‘nations’ rather than ‘countries’ (geographical term) or ‘states’ (political term). ‘Nation’ encompasses both the government and the population of a country.

Hard or Soft Power?

As part of our analysis, we conceptualised hard power alongside Soft Power. It is impossible to talk about one without touching on the other. Although building up hard power capabilities is inevitable, nations should pay more attention to Soft Power and make it their preferred tool of foreign policy.

The times they are a-changin’

Most research on Soft Power has centred on developed nations and almost equated Soft Power with liberal values. Such understanding of Soft Power leads to a very narrow account of what constitutes ‘attraction’, especially in times marked by change.

With our study being driven by an analysis of Soft Power of a broad range of nations, and conducting the survey in all corners of the world, we aimed to account for cultural differences and differing views.

Soft Power rests on several pillars

Soft Power is derived and exercised in a variety of ways. We have divided the building blocks of Soft Power into 8 key pillars: Business & Trade, Governance, International Relations, Culture & Heritage, Media & Communication, Education & Science, People & Values, and Sustainable Future.

Enhanced measurement of sustainability perceptions

The past few years were like no other, putting the nations of the world to the test as they fought to negotiate the fallout and devastating repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. No nation was free from the turmoil. Therefore, at the time, we included a special metric in the Global Soft Power Index measuring the perceptions of the COVID-19 Response of nations, which as the pandemic has largely passed, has been discontinued for this year’s research.

Now, as the climate emergency takes centre stage as the next global challenge, we have enhanced our measurement of environmental sustainability in the Sustainable Future pillar.

Perceptions of nation brands

In measuring Soft Power, we survey perceptions of nation brands by the global general public across 35 attributes grouped under the 8 pillars. These nation brand attributes drive the Reputation and Influence of nations, which are key to developing Soft Power, which in turn allows to change preferences and behaviour of international stakeholders to bring economic benefits. The third KPI measured in the Index – Familiarity – enables stakeholders to form their perceptions in the first place.

Methodology

How the Index is constructed

The Global Soft Power Index is based on the most comprehensive and wide-ranging research programme of its kind, with responses gathered from over 110,000 people across more than 100 countries, surveying perceptions of 121 nation brands from around the world.

In the first two waves in 2020 and 2021, two surveys were conducted:

- + **General Public:** a survey of public opinion covering residents of over 100 countries representing all continents and regions of the world
- + **Specialist Audiences:** the views of global decision-makers and influencers – representing categories identified as likely targets and conduits for Soft Power: business leaders, market analysts, politicians, academics, think-tanks and NGOs, and journalists

With both surveys yielding similar results, it was decided to focus on the General Public sample for 2022 and 2023, enabling us to increase the sample size significantly, and in particular the robustness of results within individual fieldwork markets. Thus, the 2023 Index is based solely on perceptions among the General Public.

The Global Soft Power Index incorporates a broad range of measures, which in combination provide a balanced and holistic assessment of nations’ presence, reputation, and impact on the world stage. These include:

- + **Familiarity:** nation brands which people know, and have mental availability of, have greater Soft Power
- + **Influence:** the degree to which a nation is seen to have influence in the respondent’s country as well as on the world stage
- + **Reputation:** is this country deemed to have a strong and positive reputation globally?
- + **Performance** on the core 8 Soft Power Pillars (Business &

Trade, Governance, International Relations, Culture & Heritage, Media & Communication, Education & Science, People & Values, Sustainable Future)

This year, we have removed the COVID-19 Response pillar as the salience of pandemic perceptions declines. Instead, we have enhanced our measurement of environmental sustainability by introducing three new attributes alongside ‘acts to protect the environment’ to form a separate Sustainable Future pillar. A new attribute ‘invests in space exploration’ has also been added under the Education & Science pillar.

The weightings given to each measure within the Index were based on a combination of expert opinion, coming from an extensive literature review and expert consultation process, and statistical analysis assessing the degree to which pillar performance correlates with Influence and Reputation.

The introduction of new attributes has not affected the weightings of the existing ones to ensure year-on-year comparability.

Nation brands ranked in the Index

121 nation brands were included in the research programme, including Zimbabwe for the first time.

Key nations whose global reputations are of greatest interest to Index users and subscribers (e.g. China, US, Brazil) were prioritised as ‘Tier 1’ (see map). These 32 Tier 1 countries have larger sample sizes rating them.

Fieldwork and sampling

An online survey was conducted among a sample of 111,364 adults aged 18-75, across 101 countries. As such, our sample is representative of the online population of each country.

In developing markets with relatively low internet access (below 85% across all age



groups), this skews the sample somewhat towards younger people with higher education, income, and connectivity – but we deem this acceptable, as it is these groups in the population who are most likely to be affected by Soft Power and have some familiarity with other nations.

Fieldwork Method

Two fieldwork approaches were employed. Both have been shown to provide good representations of public opinion.

In more developed markets, established online research panels were used. Panel selection and management was conducted by Savanta.

Where online panel coverage is weak, we partnered with Bolt Insight, adopting a relatively new and cutting-edge approach based on buying advertising space via digital marketing exchanges. Such an approach can be applied even to very challenging markets like Iraq and Venezuela.

Quotas were applied by age, gender, and (in panel markets) region – in line with the online population profiles of each country.

Note that no fieldwork was conducted in Russia for the 2023 Index, as in our view a reliable survey of Russian public opinion on these topics cannot be undertaken.

Instead the results from 2022 were used in our model.

Regional and global total scores were calculated by combining country results using the following weights:

- + 50% – the ‘one country one vote’ rule, accounting for the sovereignty and differences between the multitude of nations around the world
- + 50% – the size of the online population aged 18-75, with in effect the opinions of the residents of large countries, e.g. China, receiving a much greater weight than those of smaller countries, e.g. Estonia

Questionnaire

Each respondent was shown a random sub-set of nation brands – drawn from the 121 included in the Index – and asked about their Familiarity.

For countries about which the respondent had some knowledge, we obtained a detailed assessment of reputation, influence, and performance on 35 characteristics representing the core 8 Soft Power Pillars.

Across each country sample, the 121 nation brands were rotated to ensure that all nations were assessed globally. Surveys were conducted in the major languages of each country, totaling 54 languages globally.

General Public Country Coverage

- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Nation Brand Only - No Fieldwork

Over 111,000 interviews were conducted across the 101 countries surveyed. This included most of the 121 nations included for assessment of the Global Soft Power Index, with the exception of countries which are either very small (e.g. Luxembourg, Iceland) or where online surveys are challenging (e.g. Cuba, Iran).

The sample size in each country was a minimum of 500 in all markets, and above 750 except in the case of:

Country	Number
Portugal	616
Romania	591
Chile	589
Austria	587
Ireland	577
Colombia	573
Czech Republic	572
Slovenia	565
Thailand	561
Estonia	550
Philippines	550
Lithuania	550
Bolivia	545
Slovakia	539
Greece	535
Uruguay	533
Hungary	532
Ecuador	527
Peru	525
Latvia	523
Bulgaria	520
Serbia	518
Croatia	513
Paraguay	512

In key markets much larger samples were obtained – above 2,000 in each of: India (3,713), China (3,549), USA (3,538), Germany (3,034), France (3,015), UK (3,012), Nigeria (2,491), and Kenya (2,480).

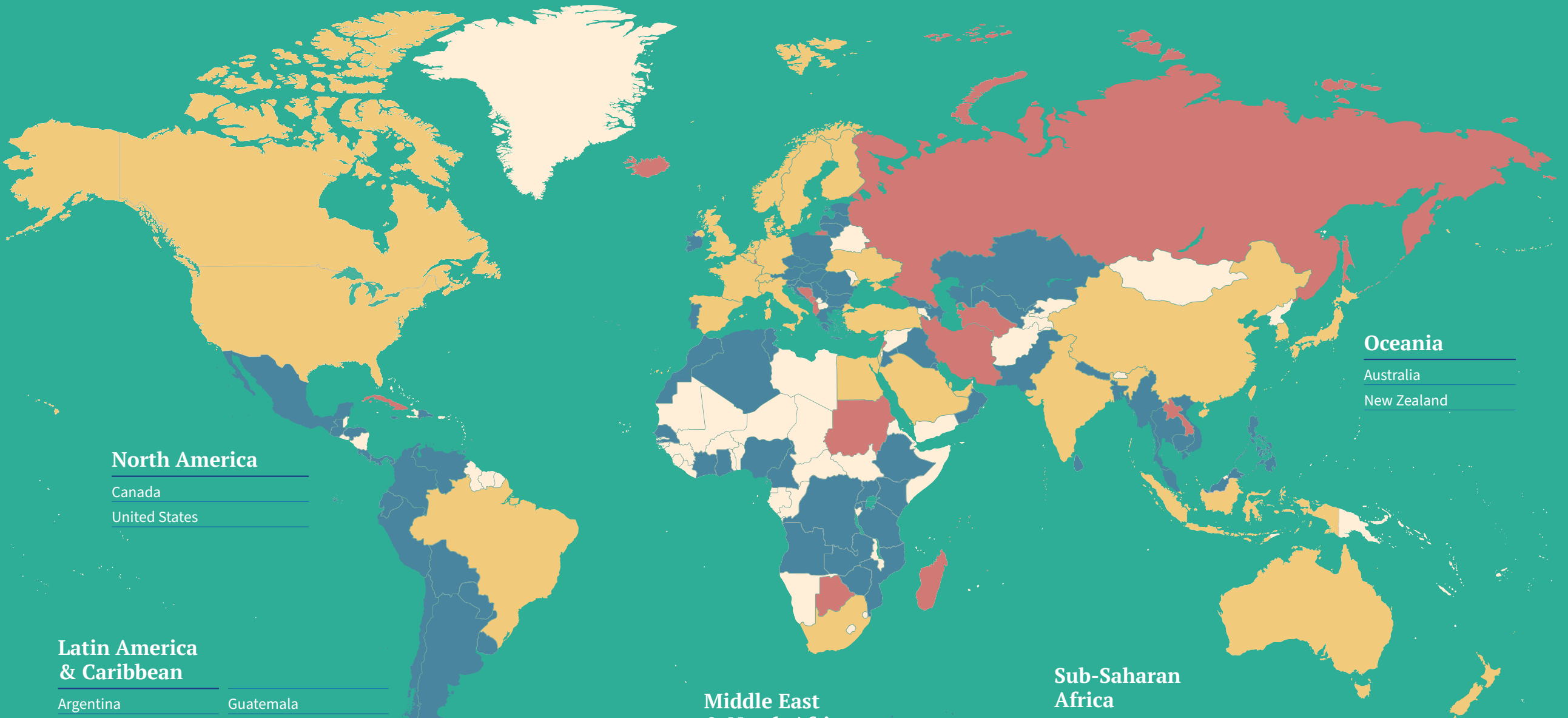
Europe

Albania	Cyprus
Austria	Czech Republic
Azerbaijan	Denmark
Belgium	Estonia
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Finland
Bulgaria	France
Croatia	Georgia
	Germany

Greece	Malta	Slovakia
Hungary	Montenegro	Spain
Iceland	Norway	Sweden
Ireland	Poland	Switzerland
Italy	Portugal	Turkey
Latvia	Romania	Ukraine
Luxembourg	Russia	United Kingdom
Lithuania	Serbia	

Asia

Bangladesh	Malaysia	Singapore
Cambodia	Maldives	Sri Lanka
China	Myanmar	Thailand
India	Nepal	Turkmenistan
Indonesia	Pakistan	Uzbekistan
Japan	Philippines	Vietnam
Kazakhstan	Singapore	
Laos	South Korea	



North America

Canada
United States

Latin America & Caribbean

Argentina	Guatemala
Barbados	Honduras
Bolivia	Jamaica
Brazil	Mexico
Chile	Panama
Colombia	Paraguay
Costa Rica	Peru
Cuba	Trinidad and Tobago
Dominican Republic	Uruguay
Ecuador	Venezuela

Middle East & North Africa

Algeria	Morocco
Bahrain	Lebanon
Egypt	Oman
Iran	Qatar
Iraq	Saudi Arabia
Israel	Tunisia
Jordan	United Arab Emirates
Kuwait	

Sub-Saharan Africa

Angola	Mauritius	Uganda
Botswana	Mozambique	Zambia
Cameroon	Nigeria	Zimbabwe
Côte d'Ivoire	Rwanda	
Dem. Rep. Congo	Senegal	
Ethiopia	Seychelles	
Ghana	South Africa	
Kenya	Sudan	
Madagascar	Tanzania	

Oceania

Australia
New Zealand

02

Executive Summary

What are the highlights from this year's Index?

- Russia's reputation plummets, sending it down the ranking
- Ukraine sees strongest soft power improvement this year
- Stable results for the top 3 superpowers: US, UK, Germany
- Japan swaps places with China in the top 5
- The UAE enters the top 10 for the first time
- Nordic nations benefit from sustainability perceptions
- The top 30 without Latin American or Sub-Saharan African nations
- Sri Lanka sees steepest fall in ranking following crisis

Executive Summary.



Konrad Jagodzinski
Place Branding Director,
Brand Finance

2022 was marked by a number of events that have tested the Soft Power of all nations. The Russian invasion of Ukraine, protests in Iran, and the passing of Queen Elizabeth II were among the most prominent.

As the economy began recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, it was hit by inflation that seems unlikely to slow down anytime soon, with governments trying to manage the energy crisis as best as they can to protect consumers and businesses. This was the background music playing as Brand Finance conducted the research for this new report.

The Global Soft Power Index is a research study into the perceptions of 121 nation brands from around the world. It is based on the most comprehensive and wide-ranging fieldwork of its kind, with responses gathered from over 100,000 people across more than 100 markets.

The Global Soft Power Index 2023 is the fourth iteration of this study, which Brand

Finance hopes to continue conducting annually.

The United States of America has again claimed the top spot with a score of 74.8 out of 100 followed by the United Kingdom (67.3), and Germany (65.8).

There is hardly any change among the world's top 10 Soft Power superpowers this year, with a notable exception of the United Arab Emirates (55.2) moving up to 10th place as the first nation from the Middle East to achieve that feat. Further down the ranking, we are seeing much more disruption and movement.

While nations have turned to Soft Power to restore trade and tourism after a devastating health crisis, the world order has again been disrupted by the hard power of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. An event that would be hard to believe were it not for the intensity of the images we have been seeing for months and the consequences the conflict is having on politics and the economy alike.

On Soft Power, Russia has already lost to Ukraine

At dawn on 24th February 2022, President Vladimir Putin launched missile attacks on Kyiv starting the biggest military conflict in Europe since World War II. One year on, the global economy remains weakened by the war due to major trade disruptions and food and fuel price shocks, which are contributing to rising

inflation and tighter global financial conditions.





















While Russia's Familiarity and Influence scores have gone up because of the impact that its decision to go to war has had on lives the world over, the nation's Reputation has been severely damaged. Russia's Reputation ranking, one of the main determinants of Soft Power, has fallen from 23rd to an abysmal 105th resulting in an overall Index erosion of -1.3 points (more than any other nation) and causing it to drop out of the top 10 down to 13th. It also now ranks 119th for the People & Values pillar and for the "good relations with other countries" attribute in International Relations.

And these are not the only consequences that Russia has suffered, global sanctions have caused the nation's perceptions as "easy to do business in and with" to fall by 61 places and having "future growth potential" by 74 places. The nation has lost ground relative to others in the Index on all 35 attributes apart from "affairs I follow closely".

At the same time, Ukraine gains +10.1 points (more than any other nation) driven by a steep increase in Familiarity and Influence and jumps 14 ranks up to 37th from 51st the previous year.

Ukraine now ranks 3rd in the world for "affairs I follow closely" and sees significant gains across attributes accentuated in official communications and media

Global Soft Power Index Top 20

	1 ← 1	United States		11 ↑ 14	Sweden
	74.8	70.7 +4.1		55.1	52.3 +2.8
	2 ← 2	United Kingdom		12 ↓ 11	Spain
	67.3	64.9 +2.4		54.9	53.0 +1.8
	3 ← 3	Germany		13 ↓ 9	Russia
	65.8	64.6 +1.2		54.8	56.1 -1.3
	4 ↑ 5	Japan		14 ↓ 13	Australia
	65.2	63.5 +1.7		54.6	52.7 +1.9
	5 ↓ 4	China		15 ↓ 12	South Korea
	65.0	64.2 +0.8		53.9	52.9 +1.0
	6 ← 6	France		16 ← 16	Netherlands
	62.4	60.6 +1.8		53.7	50.6 +3.1
	7 ← 7	Canada		17 ← 17	Norway
	60.7	59.5 +1.2		52.6	49.7 +2.9
	8 ← 8	Switzerland		18 ← 18	Denmark
	58.5	56.6 +2.0		51.8	48.8 +3.0
	9 ↑ 10	Italy		19 ↑ 24	Saudi Arabia
	56.6	54.7 +1.8		51.3	47.1 +4.1
	10 ↑ 15	United Arab Emirates		20 ↓ 19	Belgium
	55.2	52.0 +3.2		51.2	48.5 +2.8

reports, such as “respects law and human rights” (up 69 to 29th), “tolerant and inclusive” (up 63 to 44th), and “leader in technology and innovation” (up 26 to 50th).

The popularity of Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, his ministers, and advisors, results in the nation going up 36 ranks to 12th on “internationally admired leaders”.

Nevertheless, many other attributes are affected negatively, from the obvious “safe and secure” (down 60 to 118th) or “great place to visit” (down 38 to 118th), to perceptions of Ukraine’s culture and people as the focus shifts to their suffering.

Perceptions of other nation brands have also been affected by the conflict. Since the beginning of the war, Poland has played a particularly important role, taking in more Ukrainian refugees than anyone else and advocating for diplomatic, economic, and military assistance to Kyiv as part of the West’s response to Russia’s aggression.

As a result, Poland’s Familiarity and Influence have increased, and the overall Index score improved by +6.9 points, moving it up seven places to 33rd – its all-time highest ranking.

It records some of its biggest gains across attributes associated with humanitarian support for Ukraine and its people, such as “generous” (up 62 to 29th), “tolerant and

inclusive” (up 60 to 24th), and “helpful to countries in need” (up 33 to 15th).

USA unrivalled as the Soft Power superpower

Under President Joe Biden, the United States reclaimed its top spot in the ranking in last year’s Index and has further increased the lead over other nation brands this year.

The USA’s overall score is up +4.1 points to an all-time high of 74.8. With the strengthening of the dollar and widely publicised large-scale investment projects by the federal government, perceptions of the US economy are on the up, resulting in America claiming the top spot for Business & Trade from China.

The US also benefits from the introduction of a new “invests in space exploration” attribute in the Education & Science pillar, where it ranks 1st in the world. In fact, the US ranks 1st in twelve and among the top 3 in four more categories, bagging 16 Soft Power medals – more than any other nation brand in the Index.

The US records stable scores across most categories. However, mounting problems with shootings, gun crime, and police violence continue to erode perceptions of the country as “safe and secure” (down from 21st in 2020 to 62nd this year) and of its people as “friendly” (down from 5th in 2020 to 103rd this year).

The end of the Second Elizabethan Era

In the United Kingdom, 2022 will be remembered as the end of an era. The passing of Queen Elizabeth II at the age of 96, after 70 years on the throne, shook the nation. At the same time, intense media coverage of the period of mourning and the monarch’s spectacular funeral attended by the world’s leaders reminded the world of Britain’s greatest Soft Power assets.

The UK has defended its 2nd position in the Index this year, with an increase of +2.4 points to 65.8, recording increases across a number of attributes, from “good relations with other countries” (up 7 ranks) to “appealing lifestyle” (up 5 ranks).

Last year will also go down in British history for its three prime ministers. After the fall of Boris Johnson’s government as a result of “Partygate”, Liz Truss shot to power as quickly as she lost it to Rishi Sunak, becoming the country’s shortest-serving prime minister ever. While the nation’s overall Reputation has not been dented, perceptions of the UK as “politically stable and well-governed” declined relative to others (down 10 ranks).

Germany post-Merkel holds its own

Many worried about Germany losing its international standing after the departure of Angela Merkel. A year later, the nation has largely held its own, retaining 3rd position in the





Index, with an increase of +1.2 points to 65.8. Olaf Scholz’s government has struggled with criticism of its hesitant response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, but this has had little impact on the nation’s perceptions among the global general public.

Germany’s nation brand strength transcends political crises, proving its resilience regardless of who is in charge.

China retains “future growth potential” despite COVID-19 restrictions

Although China has seen marginal growth of its Global Soft Power Index score (+0.8 to 65.0), it dropped in the ranking from 4th in 2022 to 5th in 2023, overtaken by Japan. While most nations accelerated their global engagement across trade, investment, tourism, and talent, China remained closed last year, maintaining a “zero COVID” policy.

Reduced mental and physical availability of China’s nation brand among global audiences undermined its ability to improve perceptions at the same pace as competing economies, resulting in some relative declines, such as in the People & Values (down 57 to 95th) and Media & Communication (down 12 to 24th) pillars.

Nevertheless, on many metrics China has largely defended its position from last year and it remains 2nd in the world for Influence, behind only the US, and 3rd in the Education &

Science pillar, with particularly strong performance across “leader in technology and innovation” (2nd), “leader in science” (3rd), and the new attribute: “invests in space exploration” (3rd).

The nation also maintains its global #1 positions for “easy to do business in and with” and “future growth potential”, pointing to the resilience of its Business & Trade credentials, despite an overall rank drop for the pillar to 3rd. Revised economic growth forecasts by the International Monetary Fund confirm that China is back in business in 2023, predicting 5.2% GDP growth, above the level of previous expectations as private consumption rebounds following the country’s opening post-COVID at the end of 2022.

UAE enters top 10 for the first time

With otherwise little change in the top 10, the performance of the United Arab Emirates is a standout. For the fourth year running, the Emirates achieved the highest score of any Middle Eastern nation brand, but this year’s increase of +3.2 to 55.2 has meant a jump of five ranks to allow it to claim 10th position in the global ranking for the first time.

Both Reputation and Influence of the Gulf nation have seen notable increases this year. The UAE was one of the first economies to roll out mass vaccination and open during the COVID-19 pandemic, giving it a head start ahead of others and allowing it to maintain

positive perceptions across the Business & Trade pillar with a particular improvement on the “future growth potential” attribute, where it ranks 3rd globally (up 8 ranks).

The successful showcase of the Emirates as a global trade hub thanks to EXPO 2020 has also undoubtedly provided a significant boost. At the same time, the UAE is one of the largest donors of foreign aid as a percentage of GDP, which is recognised by the global general public counting it among the world’s most “generous” nations – 3rd (up 7 ranks).

Perceptions of the UAE’s Governance and International Relations are on the up too and the nation’s salience is only expected to grow. The Emirates Mars Mission has landed the UAE at 8th for “invests in space exploration”, while hosting the world’s most high-profile climate conference, COP 28, will put the nation firmly in the spotlight in 2023.

The historically oil-heavy economy continues to increase its commitment to diversification, innovation, and investment in a more Sustainable Future. The UAE already scores relatively high on the new Soft Power pillar of that name, placing 19th globally.

Gulf nations on the rise

Other Gulf nations have also seen a surge in Global Soft Power Index scores in 2023, explained by a growing salience at a time of a global

energy crisis sparked by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Home to one-quarter of the world’s known oil reserves and with the largest output of oil production globally, Saudi Arabia has gone up to 9th in the Influence ranking and enters the overall Index top 20 for the first time at 19th.

As the Kingdom has played a crucial role in providing energy security for the rest of the world, its rank for “strong and stable economy” has also increased to 14th (up 7 ranks), resulting in an improvement of the whole Business & Trade pillar score.

But Saudi Arabia is looking beyond oil – showcasing its tourism appeal on the one hand and commitment to energy transition on the other. It ranks 11th in the world for “rich heritage” and places highly for “invests in green energy and technologies” (25th) as well as “sustainable cities and transport” (27th).

Through Vision 2030, the Kingdom has emphasised its commitment to a transition to a more sustainable economy. This has included significant investment in renewable energy, particularly through the development of the hydrocarbon industry.

Fellow Gulf nation Qatar has also seen impressive gains in this year’s Global Soft Power Index.

In 2022, Qatar hosted the world’s most widely viewed sporting event, the FIFA

Football World Cup. Organising a major sporting event can really put a nation brand on the map.

With improvements recorded across the three KPIs of Familiarity, Reputation, and Influence, Qatar enters the top 25 for the first time, coming 24th in the overall Index ranking.

Despite mixed press in the run up to the event, the tournament was a major success, enhanced by a blockbuster final which saw Argentina take the coveted trophy.

Qatar showcased its key Soft Power assets to a global audience of fans in the stadiums and in front of TV screens, improving perceptions particularly across Culture & Heritage attributes. But also scores for attributes associated with the controversies, such as “respects law and human rights” (up 11 ranks) and “tolerant and inclusive” (up 12 ranks), have seen improvements.

Nordics benefit from sustainability perceptions

Nordic countries, Sweden (11th), Norway (17th), Denmark (18th), Finland (22nd), and Iceland (34th) all benefited from the enhanced measurement of environmental sustainability perceptions in this year’s Global Soft Power Index.

All boosted their Soft Power scores, with Sweden, Finland, and Iceland also rising 3 places in the ranking each.

Leading the pack, Sweden ranks 3rd on the new Sustainable Future pillar, behind only Germany and Japan, scoring highly across the board in all four attributes that constitute it. Currently around 60% of Sweden’s national energy supply comes from renewable sources, with a plan to go 100% fossil-fuel-free by 2045.

As sustainability becomes an ever-more-important factor for Soft Power, Sweden and other Nordic countries will have an important role to play in setting the pace for the energy transition. They can act as working examples of the successful incorporation of sustainability into all levels of society and business.

Top 30 without Latin American or Sub-Saharan African nations

Latin American and Sub-Saharan African nation brands consistently underperform in the Index. Brazil is Latin America’s highest ranked this year at 31st, down from 28th in 2022. The country has faced a difficult few years due to a high COVID-19 toll and a tumultuous political situation.

Its government, under the presidency of populist Jair Bolsonaro, was criticised for its response to the pandemic and its environmental policy. On top of that, encouraged by the dubious example of President Donald Trump’s supporters in the US, hard-line Bolsonaro followers stormed Brazil’s Congress, following





political rival Lula da Silva’s inauguration in January 2023.

Brazil’s volatile political environment gained worldwide coverage and has clearly affected its Soft Power standing. Brazil scores significantly below the global average for the Governance pillar, in which it dropped by 28 ranks to the abysmal 86th place globally, with particular lows for “high ethical standards and low corruption” (115th), “safe and secure” (108th), and “politically stable and well-governed” (88th) metrics. Nevertheless, the change of presidency offers a new opening and a new hope for Brazil’s Governance perceptions.

Furthermore, Brazil has a strong global Familiarity, ranking 12th, and continues to perform well in the Culture & Heritage pillar, where it comes 9th. Brazilians are perceived as the world’s “leaders in sports” and more “fun” than any other nation globally.

South Africa is the regional leader in Sub-Saharan Africa, although like Brazil it has also dropped in the ranking this year – to 40th place globally, down from 34th last year.

The country continues to face significant challenges in its labour market; high poverty levels and economic inequality; security issues and high crime rates; high inflation levels; and structural constraints, such as energy shortages.

This has resulted in relative declines across all pillars except Culture & Heritage for

which it has recorded minor growth. Despite seeing a 13-position reduction in the Business & Trade rank to 45th, the nation continues to be regarded as holding significant “future growth potential”, ranking 5th globally – its strongest performance across all metrics.

India’s performance improves, but offers plenty more potential

India has improved its performance in the Global Soft Power Index by one spot, inching up to 28th position in the ranking. The nation performs particularly well in the Culture & Heritage pillar – ranking 19th globally. It is firmly within the top 10 for three out of its six attributes: “influential in the arts & entertainment” (5th), “rich heritage” (7th), and “food the world loves” (8th).

India also continues to perform well in the Education & Science pillar – coming 20th globally. It ranks 14th for the “leader in science” attribute and 17th for “leader in technology and innovation”.

India also performed particularly well in the newly added “invests in space exploration” attribute, coming 9th globally. The Indian Space Research Organisation marked its first entry into commercial satellite launches in 2022, while private space technology companies within India also continued to excel.

While India has improved in this year’s ranking, it lags behind particularly on

Reputation (65th) as well as on perceptions of People & Values (93rd), Governance (103rd), and Sustainable Future (109th).

Nevertheless, it is recognised as having significant “future growth potential”, with the 2nd highest score globally. India is predicted to become the world’s most populous country before the end of this year and is going through rapid economic development. The nation brand has a lot of as yet unrealised potential and ought to become a true Soft Power superpower in future.

Sri Lanka sees steepest fall in ranking following crisis

India’s neighbour, Sri Lanka, has seen the largest fall of any country in the Index, down 42 places to 115th globally. In the last two years, the country has encountered both economic and political crisis, with supply shortages and resulting widespread anti-government protests causing a domino effect that brought Sri Lanka to effective bankruptcy.

These issues are reflected in Sri Lanka’s reduced scores across the board. Sri Lanka now ranks within the bottom 10 for all pillars apart from Culture & Heritage, where its score is higher (92nd) thanks to more positive perceptions of “rich heritage” (56th), “food the world loves” (68th), and “great place to visit” (71st).

The Soft Power Medal Table.



Artur Bryzghalov
Place Branding Associate,
Brand Finance

The Global Soft Power Index is based on the most comprehensive and wide-ranging research programme of its kind, with responses gathered from over 100,000 people across more than 100 countries, surveying perceptions of Soft Power of 121 nations from around the world.

The study incorporates a broad range of measures, which provide a balanced and holistic assessment of nations’ presence, reputation, and impact on the world stage. These include three key metrics:

- +Familiarity:** nation brands which people know, and have mental availability of, have greater Soft Power.
- +Reputation:** is this country perceived to have a strong and positive reputation globally?
- +Influence:** the degree to which a nation is seen to have influence in the respondent’s country as well as on the world stage.

The performance on the core 8 Soft Power Pillars (Business & Trade, Governance, International Relations, Culture & Heritage, Media & Communication, Education & Science, People & Values, and Sustainable Future) all contribute to the overall evaluation.

According to these, the top ten nations in the 2023 Soft Power ranking are, in order: the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, China, France, Canada, Switzerland, Italy, and the United Arab Emirates.

Because the overall ranking is a composite of evaluations on different categories, Brand Finance has designated the best-performing nations in each category as ‘medallists’, awarding a gold, silver, and bronze medal to the highest-ranked nations in each field.

United States wins Soft Power Olympics

The United States is this year's most decorated Soft Power country. With a total of 16 medals it is ahead of Switzerland and Canada, which each earned 13 medals.

This year, the US earned gold in twelve areas, two of them the key performance indicators of Familiarity and Influence. Last year, Switzerland and the US scored the exact same number of golds, silvers, and bronzes, but now the US has taken a firm lead. Switzerland is the country with the best Reputation in the world, followed by Canada and Japan who took the silver and bronze medals respectively.

Germany perceived as the most sustainable nation

This year's Global Soft Power Index 2023 research includes several new metrics relating to Sustainable Future. Germany is, according to the research, the best-perceived nation in terms of environmental sustainability. It is followed by Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, and Norway.

While Germany leads the Sustainable Future pillar overall, it wins no gold medals for the attributes that make it. Japan takes gold in two of its metrics, namely “sustainable cities and transport” and “invests in green energy and technologies”, with the US in the lead for “supports global efforts to counter climate change”, and Norway coming top for “acts to protect the environment”.

Germany has been proactive in developing ambitious environmental policies during the last decade. The country’s strong environmental framework makes it not only a pioneer in environmental protection and sustainable development, but also constitutes a good

Soft Power Medal Winners

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Pillars				Metrics
				Familiarity
				Reputation
				Influence
				Easy to do business in and with
				A strong and stable economy
				Products and brands the world loves
				Future growth potential
				Internationally admired leaders
				Politically stable & well-governed
				High ethical standards and low corruption
				Safe & secure
				Respects law and human rights
				Influential in diplomatic circles
				Helpful to countries in need
				Good relations with other countries
				Influential in arts and entertainment
				Food the world loves
				A great place to visit
				Rich heritage
				An appealing lifestyle
				Leaders in sports
				Easy to communicate with
				Affairs I follow closely
				Influential media
				Trustworthy media
				A leader in science
				Strong educational system
				Leader in technology and innovation
				Invests in space exploration
				Generous
				Fun
				Friendly
				Trustworthy
				Tolerant & Inclusive
				Acts to protect the environment
				Sustainable cities and transport
				Invests in green energy and technologies
				Supports global efforts to counter climate change



example on how a cleaner low-carbon economy is compatible with growth.

In its 2023 global marketing, Destination Germany will put the focus on climate-friendly travel and a responsible use of all resources.

Germany nation brand managers are actively setting the agenda for sustainable tourism through their theme-based campaigns. Together with partners in the German travel industry they are working on extending their visitors’ length of stay by offering innovative products. They are also putting more emphasis on tourism that combines cities and rural regions, and on promoting the off season.

An opportunity to shine

The medal table is where some smaller or less influential nation brands can shine and be noticed. Greece and Maldives win golds for “rich heritage” and “great place to visit” respectively. Egypt follows Greece with a silver for “rich heritage”, while Oman takes silver for “generous” driven by extremely high scores from around the Middle East.

Finally, Iceland gets a bronze for “acts to protect the environment” and the people of Portugal come third in the world for “friendly”.

The Soft Power Medal Table

					Total
1.		12	1	3	16
2.		8	2	3	13
3.		3	7	3	13
4.		3	3	2	8
5.		2	7	2	11
6.		2	2	2	6
7.		2	1	3	6
8.		2	-	-	2
9.		1	4	6	11
10.		1	1	2	4
11.		1	-	-	1
12.		1	-	-	1
12.		-	2	3	5
14.		-	2	1	3
15.		-	1	2	3
16.		-	1	-	1
17.		-	1	-	1
18.		-	1	-	1
19.		-	1	-	1
20.		-	1	-	1
21.		-	-	2	2
22.		-	-	1	1
23.		-	-	1	1
24.		-	-	1	1
25.		-	-	1	1



03

Brand Finance Insights

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How to interpret and leverage the data?

- Soft Power is More Than Just a Great Reputation
- How to Build Reputation and Influence? A Roadmap to Setting Strategic Priorities
- Nation Brand Value
- Can Nation Brand Perceptions Predict Performance?
- Global Soft Power Summit 2023: Sustainability
- Do the Media Decide for Us What is Important?
- Sports and Soft Power

Soft Power is More Than Just a Great Reputation.



Steven Thomson
Insights Director,
Brand Finance

The Global Soft Power Index uses a balanced scorecard approach to evaluating nation brand perceptions which recognises that Soft Power encompasses elements of visibility, reach, weight. Soft Power is more than reputation alone.

Of course, Reputation is important. Soft Power aims to impact attitudes and (ultimately) behaviour through attraction or persuasion rather than coercion, and for a nation to be attractive and a role model for others, its overall Reputation must be as positive as possible.

But that is often not sufficient. There are plentiful examples of nations with positive Reputations but somewhat limited Soft Power, beyond very specific arenas/pillars or in neighbouring countries.

We also emphasise the importance of Familiarity and mental availability – if you have a good Reputation you want as many people as possible to know about it, and to have frequent reminders and demonstrations of your qualities.

Our third KPI is Influence – the perceived presence and impact that your nation has in other countries, overall or in specific areas. #Familiarity and Reputation are positively correlated with Influence, but the relationships between these three KPIs (and their underlying drivers) is complex, and a balanced Soft Power strategy should always aim to fire on all cylinders.

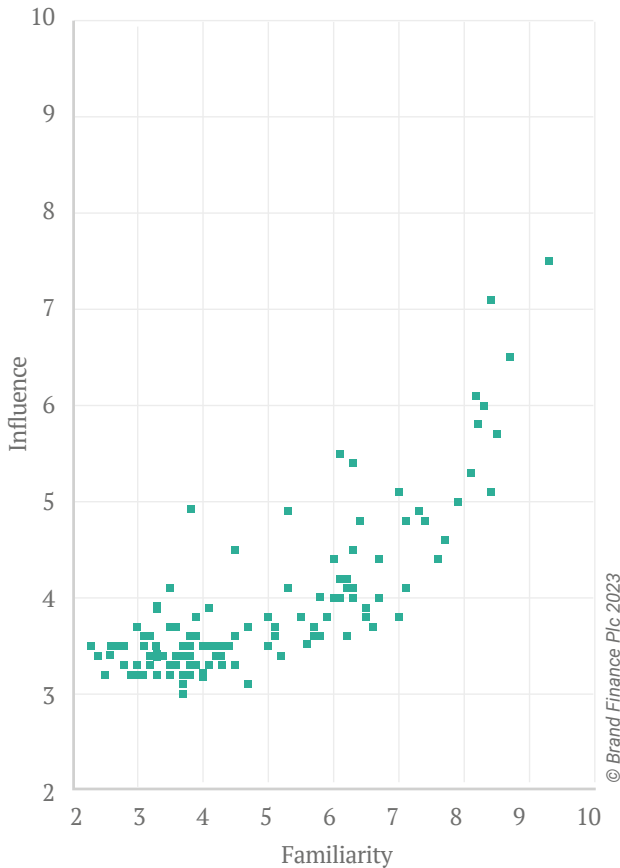
Familiarity underpins Influence

It is hard to have much Influence and thus Soft Power if you are a small, geographically-remote, and/or relatively obscure nation.

But it is not a linear relationship – if you have a strong Reputation and widespread Influence in specific fields, you are going to be less obscure, people will visit your nation, do business with you, and absorb your culture – all of which will in turn increase your mental availability and Familiarity.

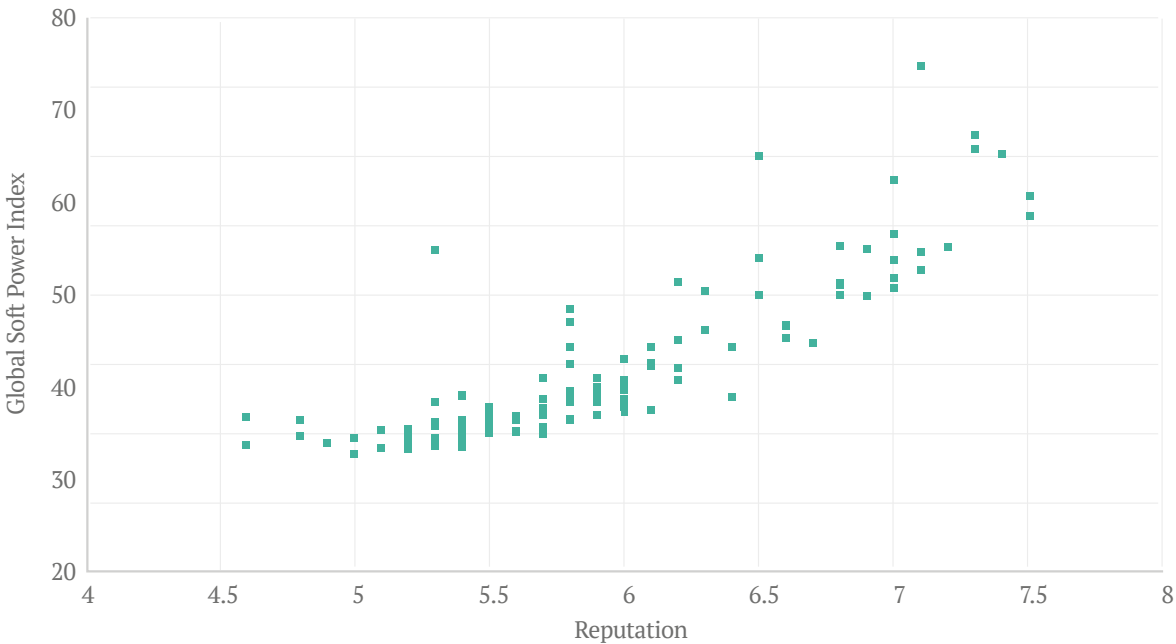
But Influence and Soft Power are clearly not purely a function of Familiarity, otherwise Pakistan and Finland would have similar levels of each, in line with Familiarity. Arguably, therefore, Familiarity is necessary but not sufficient.

Familiarity x Influence



Reputation x Global Soft Power Index Score

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A strong Reputation takes you to the next level

Salience and Familiarity are clearly important foundations of Soft Power, but to build on that your target audiences need to see something desirable in your actions, governance, values, culture, or products. The logical argument is that a great Reputation is also necessary for a nation to grow its Soft Power base, and while that is largely true, there are some obvious exceptions.

Nations with weak Reputations do indeed generally have very limited Soft Power, even when they are relatively large and strategically 'important'. Nigeria, India, and Brazil are good examples of nations that have considerable Soft Power potential but underperform in terms of Reputation. In Nigeria's case this is limiting its Influence within sub-Saharan Africa (let alone beyond). Common sense says that a more positive Reputation would improve these nations' Influence and overall Soft Power.

As the chart above shows, a great Reputation can take you a long way, if not to the very top of our Soft Power rankings. Among the top 30 nations for Reputation, all wield significant Soft Power apart

from very small nations (e.g. Maldives, Iceland), and even these punch well above their weight.

So while a strong Reputation may not always be sufficient to be a Soft Power heavyweight, obviously it is a key component.

Influence complements Reputation

Hence, a nation with a negative or mixed Reputation can never fulfil its Soft Power potential – but there are several examples of nations with significant Soft Power despite a Reputation that we might politely say has 'room for improvement'.

Russia is the most obvious outlier, where sheer size, historical Influence and, arguably, hard power, combine to ensure that Russia retains Soft Power assets – but unless Russia can turn its Reputation around these are likely to erode in the medium term.

Israel, China, Saudi Arabia, UK, and USA are other examples of nations whose Soft Power rankings are not a merely a function of having a 'perfect' Reputation.



However, for these nations, their Reputations generally are positive – very good in many cases. Saudi Arabia, for example, may not be universally acclaimed but ranks a respectable 32nd for overall Reputation and in the top 15 for economic stability, diplomatic influence, and heritage.

Similarly, while Israel polarises opinion somewhat, its qualities are acknowledged even in relatively hostile markets (for example, Chinese respondents are negative towards Israel overall but admire its educational and scientific achievements).

The magic ingredient that translates a ‘good enough’ Reputation into strong Soft Power is Influence. Best-practice for developing Soft Power thus considers how best to improve Reputation and Influence.

Influence is not easily earned, but there are steps that nations can take to build it. Nations which punch above their weight for Influence typically have one or more of these characteristics listed in the table below.

The last two elements will be more directly impacted by the actions of nation brand marketing teams and activity – even the smallest, most remote or economically-challenged nation can undertake actions to grow its Influence. Our section on drivers analysis discusses how.



Characteristics	Example Nations	
Large nations often able to wield hard/economic as well as Soft Power		
Significant historical and cultural ties built up over decades		
High GDP per-capita		
Geographically strategic location		
Linguistic advantages		
Effective ‘influence-building’ strategies and actions		
Strong role models with excellent reputations		

How to Build Reputation and Influence? A Roadmap to Setting Strategic Priorities.



Carine Guillou
Research Director,
Brand Finance

Nurturing reputation and coming across as an influential player are both essential objectives for nation brands as it is important to build recognition in the best possible light in order to grow Soft Power. It will establish trust and provide a strong base for securing national interests. It will also help to attract investors, tourists, trade, and talent.

But how should nation brands go about growing Reputation and Influence?

Build a global strategic axis around key drivers

Prioritising activities that have an impact across many countries will save money and increase efficiency.



Katrina Rogala
Analytics Manager,
Brand Finance

Cultural and market specificities exist, but it is easy to get submerged into local tailoring paralysis. Therefore, while it is important to acknowledge these differences, it is best to start with identifying commonalities.

Our Global Soft Power Index research shows that there is a great opportunity for nation brands to build a global strategic axis where broad priorities, content, and guidelines can be harmonised. Running regression analysis against the Reputation and Influence metrics, we see that despite cultural differences, certain attributes consistently come out as stronger drivers regardless of country, region, or continent.

Likely linked to the universal need for security and safety, solid economic and political foundations are paramount – that is both internally and in global affairs. Both Reputation and Influence are strongly driven by a nation’s ability to demonstrate a strong and stable economy with openness for business. Influence is also primarily linked to a nation’s convincing power in diplomatic circles while Reputation is very positively impacted by internationally admired leaders and a well-governed and politically stable situation.

This means nations should endeavour to display reasonable messaging and actions that will make them come across as strong figures and role models.

Top 5 Global Drivers of Reputation

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Top 5 Global Drivers of Influence

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Other key drivers of Influence include attracting press interest (“affairs I follow closely”) and an often-overlooked area – “influential in arts and entertainment” – it is in fact an efficient lever and one that would certainly work to boost Familiarity too.

Another dominant driver of Reputation is “sustainable cities and transport”, which is indicative of the shifting mentality towards social responsibility and the expectation of leadership from governments and elected officials in this space.

Finetune locally and build cross-border acceptance

Understanding how to execute the strategy locally can involve considering additional local drivers to leverage. For example, in China, “food the world loves” is far more important than it is at the global level where it ranks 28th out of the 35 attributes. In Japan, on the other hand, “great place to visit” jumps to third place, up from 24th globally.

Meanwhile, “products and brands the world loves” is important to both China and Japan and likewise far more so than at a global level.

A strategy linked to these local drivers may be worthwhile if these markets are an important part of the overall geographical target.



Top 5 Reputation Drivers in China

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Top 5 Reputation Drivers in Japan

© Brand Finance Plc 2023





Nonetheless, the most important aspect of local finetuning is to support the intercultural fluency of partners, ambassadors, communities, organisations and individuals involved in the delivery of initiatives.

While nations can contribute to the world in ways that can generate positive emotions universally (food, music, sport, scenic beauty etc.), the way they present their activities can unexpectedly be misconstrued and intentions can easily be misinterpreted or recast.

Getting ahead of potential criticism is becoming increasingly complex. The international environment is full of tangible and intangible information that is widespread and vehiculated instantly via multiple digital channels.

While modern media platforms constitute a massive opportunity for initiatives that can travel across frontiers, they also increasingly expose nations to risks of backlash.

The key is to identify cultural trends early, to be responsive to public opinion and to demonstrate authenticity.

Increasing exposure to their own culture can also be a powerful way for nations to ensure positive emotions are associated with their own lifestyle and communication style.

Define your area of focus and prioritise easier wins

Once key drivers are identified, the next step is to assess performance against top drivers to define the area of focus – that is the important drivers that are weakly associated with the nation brand. Improving perceptions on these dimensions will have the highest impact.

Reinforcing strong associations with important drivers will also protect existing Reputation and Influence.

It is crucial to be realistic and strike the right balance between feasibility and potential impact. A nation must look at its resources, ease of implementation, touchpoints, government objectives, and the receptiveness of its home citizens.

A nation may have unique characteristics that are not strong drivers but could still be converted into valuable outcomes if no significant investments are required and if international relevance can be unlocked.

Finally, monitoring trends that could become more important tomorrow could play a critical role longer term.

Importance vs Performance Drivers Analysis

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High Performance	Unlock relevance of unique characteristics	Reinforce strong associations
	Monitor trends	Area of focus
Low Performance	Low Importance	High Importance

Nation Brand Value and Strength.



Dhanushika Shanmuganathan
Place Branding Associate,
Brand Finance

What difference does a nation brand make?

Nation branding is about how a country positions and promotes itself. It is an important asset that enables countries to differentiate their economic activity, people, and tourism in a global marketplace. Countries globally are becoming increasingly cognizant of the value of their nation brand as an asset. Understanding the value of a nation brand involves perceptions research and financial analysis.

The strength of a nation brand is affected by its Soft Power perceptions and building a nation’s Soft Power allows to bring economic benefits to a country, driving its nation brand value. Along with the Global Soft Power Index, Brand Finance has been tracking and publishing an annual ranking of the world’s most valuable and strongest Nation Brands for almost 20 years.

How is Nation Brand Value measured?

Brand Finance’s approach to valuing a nation brand is an adaption of the ISO 10668 Brand Valuation standard, based on the royalty relief mechanism employed to value the world’s largest corporate brands. To understand the value of a nation brand we look at two key areas: the financial performance (GDP) of the nation and the strength of the nation in the global marketplace. Whilst it is easier to compare the financial and economic performance of nations, assessing the strength can be a slightly more complex undertaking.

Nation Brand Strength in detail

The Nation Brand Strength, a score given from 0 to 100, allows us to understand the relative strength of a nation in the global marketplace. This plays a crucial role in calculating the value of the nation brand. It is the part of our analysis most directly and easily influenced by those responsible for their country’s nation branding initiatives. Nation Brand Strength is determined through a balanced scorecard of metrics evaluating brand investment, brand perceptions, and brand performance.

Nation Brand Investment looks at what assets the nation brand has compared to competing countries that would help it generate positive perceptions.

The investment pillar includes key metrics across Business & Trade, Governance, International Relations, Culture & Heritage, Media & Communications, Education & Science, People & Values, and Sustainable Future, just like the Global Soft Power Index.

The investment pillar is informed by statistical data derived from reputable public sources such as the United Nations, World Bank, and the Global Innovation Index.

Nation Brand Perceptions are the domestic and international perceptions about the nation brand. The perceptions pillar is based on the results of Brand Finance’s Global Soft Power Index.

Stakeholder perceptions are a central requirement to carrying out an accurate brand valuation and therefore Nation Brand Perceptions account for 50% of the overall Nation Brand Strength. Brand Finance’s Global Soft Power Index results therefore sit at the heart of the Nation Brand Strength assessment and Nation Brand Value calculations.

Finally, Nation Brand Performance looks at how well is the nation brand performing versus competitors. The performance pillar focuses on macroeconomic standing, as well as the four key business areas where the nation brand has the most impact: trade, investment, tourism, and talent.

The performance pillar is informed by statistical data derived from reputable public sources such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, and Euromonitor.

The Nation Brand Strength scorecard is designed to mirror the brand-building process. It naturally follows, that if you invest in your brand, you expect to see a return in brand perceptions, both amongst domestic and international audiences. This ultimately leads to an uptick in the nation’s economic activity and performance. For example, investment in the nation brand via improving trade policies or investment in infrastructure can positively impact perceptions towards the nation brand, generating Soft Power.

This in turn can result in increased FDI into the country and improved economic activity driving overall performance.

By maximising Nation Brand Strength across this chain, i.e. investment to perceptions to performance, a nation brand can maximise its positive impact on a global platform and therefore overall Nation Brand Value.

Brand Finance Nation Brands 2023 ranking highlights

Nation Brand Value is based on forward-looking macroeconomic forecasts. The 2023 valuations and economic forecasts follow a succession of downgrades in recent years as the pandemic worsened and Russia’s war in Ukraine intensified. As the IMF and World Bank upgrade their growth projections following these downgrades, this positively impacts the Nation Brand Values in the Brand Finance Nation Brands 2023 ranking. The ranking looks at the economic performance of countries, or GDP, resulting in large economies dominating in Nation Brand Value. USA and China retain their position as standout leaders on overall Nation Brand Value in 2023.

The combined value of the two nations is almost equal to that of the remaining 119 nation brands in the top 121. Other leading nations in terms of economic strength, including Germany, Japan, India, United Kingdom, France, Canada, Italy, and South Korea have consistently ranked in the top 10 of Brand Finance’s Nation Brands rankings over the years

Nation Brand Value Top 10

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<div>1 ←</div> <div>1</div> <div></div> <div>UNITED STATES</div> <div>US\$30.3 bn +14%</div>	<div>2 ←</div> <div>2</div> <div></div> <div>CHINA</div> <div>US\$23.1 bn +7%</div>	<div>3 ←</div> <div>3</div> <div></div> <div>GERMANY</div> <div>US\$5.1 bn +13%</div>	<div>4 ↑</div> <div>5</div> <div></div> <div>UNITED KINGDOM</div> <div>US\$4.8 bn +17%</div>	<div>5 ↓</div> <div>4</div> <div></div> <div>JAPAN</div> <div>US\$4.4 nb +4%</div>
<div>6 ←</div> <div>6</div> <div></div> <div>FRANCE</div> <div>US\$3.7 bn +16%</div>	<div>7 ←</div> <div>7</div> <div></div> <div>INDIA</div> <div>US\$2.9 bn +13%</div>	<div>8 ←</div> <div>8</div> <div></div> <div>CANADA</div> <div>US\$2.6 bn +17%</div>	<div>9 ←</div> <div>9</div> <div></div> <div>ITALY</div> <div>US\$2.3 bn +9%</div>	<div>10 ←</div> <div>10</div> <div></div> <div>SOUTH KOREA</div> <div>US\$2.1 bn +9%</div>

Rapid economic growth can place a nation brand in the spotlight. Bangladesh emerges as one of the fastest-growing nation brands in the ranking, recording 37% year on year growth.

The Bangladesh economy is one of the finest examples of remarkable economic development and is the World Bank’s proclaimed model for “poverty reduction”.

As Bangladesh gains global appreciation as one of the fastest-growing South Asian economies, its nation brand sees the highest increase in value and ranking within the 2023 ranking.

Large economies that are characterised by abundant resources to develop and invest in the economy, emerge as leaders on the Nation Brand Investment score. The United States leads with a score of 84.7. Investment towards Business & Trade, International Relations through development aid, as well as Education & Science are the key driving forces behind this score.

Whilst the US leads on Nation Brand Investment, Canada takes leadership on Nation Brand Perceptions amongst both international and domestic audiences with a score of 92.3.

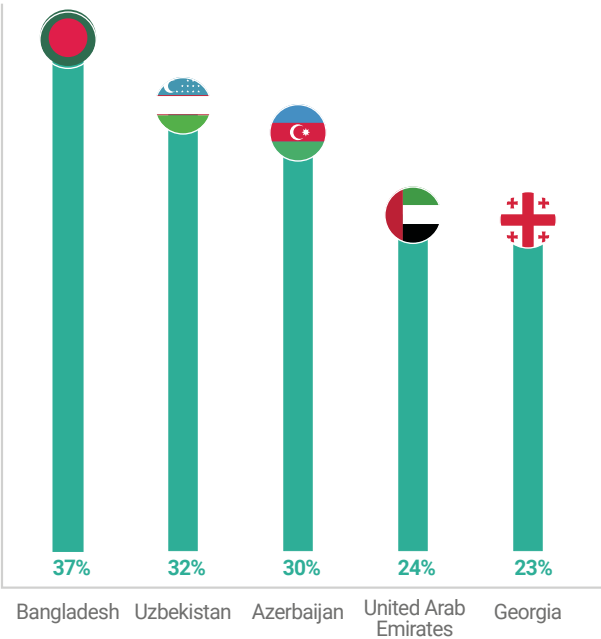
Canada boasts one of the highest living standards in the world driven by a strong economy, culturally diverse population, and one of the best education systems in the world. Strong nation brand perceptions have also resulted in Canada holding the coveted title of the world’s strongest nation brand overall for the second year in a row.

The United Arab Emirates continues to outperform others on Nation Brand Performance score, retaining leadership for the second year, with a score of 83.5. Strategic location between Asia, Europe, and Africa, strong financial reserves, progressive policies on economic diversification, and increased FDI are some of the key factors behind the UAE’s leadership.

The UAE is closely followed by Singapore. Singapore, touted as Asia’s powerhouse, has consistently been viewed as one of the most stable economies in the world driving its score in Nation Brand Performance.

Top 5 Fastest Growing

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Brand Strength Leaders

© Brand Finance Plc 2023

	Metrics		
	Investment		
	Perceptions		
	Performance		

Nation Brand Value and Nation Brand Strength are effective tools to track and assess a nation brand’s performance in a global context.

As highlighted, this undertaking goes beyond an assessment of economic strength but also looks at international and domestic perceptions.

Nation brands exist to differentiate and elevate a country in the global marketplace. By measuring and understanding their performance, nation brand management teams can leverage one of their most important assets to further the economic development and strategic goals of a country in the long run.



Nation Brand Strength Top 10

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<div>1 ←</div> <div>1</div> <div>CANADA</div> <div>83.7 +1.9</div>	<div>2 ↑</div> <div>3</div> <div>SWITZERLAND</div> <div>83.1 +2.4</div>	<div>3 ↑</div> <div>4</div> <div>GERMANY</div> <div>82.9 +2.4</div>	<div>4 ↑</div> <div>7</div> <div>UNITED KINGDOM</div> <div>81.9 +3.0</div>	<div>5 ↑</div> <div>6</div> <div>FRANCE</div> <div>81.6 +2.7</div>
<div>6 ↓</div> <div>2</div> <div>UNITED STATES</div> <div>81.2 +0.4</div>	<div>7 ↑</div> <div>9</div> <div>AUSTRALIA</div> <div>80.1 +1.5</div>	<div>8 ↑</div> <div>10</div> <div>SWEDEN</div> <div>79.4 +1.8</div>	<div>9 ↓</div> <div>5</div> <div>DENMARK</div> <div>79.2 +0.2</div>	<div>10 ↑</div> <div>11</div> <div>UNITED ARAB EMIRATES</div> <div>78.4 +1.7</div>

Can Nation Brand Perceptions Predict Performance?



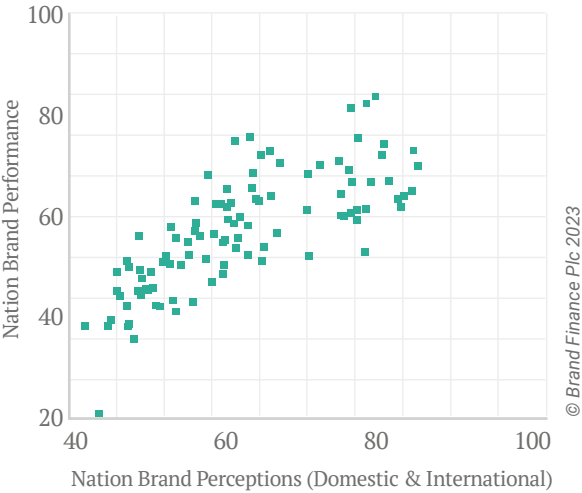
Konrad Jagodzinski
Place Branding Director,
Brand Finance

The economics of Soft Power

Brand Finance defines Soft Power as “a nation’s ability to influence the preferences and behaviours of various actors in the international arena (states, corporations, communities, publics etc.) through attraction or persuasion rather than coercion.” As the world becomes increasingly connected, Soft Power and “attraction of nations” is an instrumental tool that nations can leverage to achieve economic success.

Therefore, we set about an analysis that would allow us to better understand how the dynamics of Soft Power are intertwined with the economic gains and performance of a nation.

Nation Brand Perceptions x Performance



We looked at two of Brand Finance’s annual rankings – the Global Soft Power Index, which measures perceptions of 121 nation brands, and the Nation Brands ranking, which tracks and assesses the value and strength of nation brands. Our analysis proves that despite the existence of many and various factors that affect the performance of nations, perceptions and Soft Power that comes with them command strong predicative power.

Soft Power positively impacts the performance of nation brands

There are five key areas of financial impact that is measured within the Nation Brands ranking: economy, trade, investment, tourism, and talent. Performance across these five areas, combined, generates a Nation Brand Performance score. The relationship between a nation’s performance and its Soft Power is shown in chart below.

Analysis of this data shows that whilst there are many ubiquitous influences on a nation’s performance, Soft Power can create a tangible payoff.

Nations with strong perceptions are seen to generate strong performance - United Arab Emirates with leading perceptions towards global influence, international relations, and business and trade is a nation that is effectively leveraging its Soft Power to drive economic performance. Similarly, Singapore and Ireland have leveraged their strong global reputation in creating positive economic performance. At the same time, weaker global perceptions are seen to correlate with weaker economic performance such as in the cases of Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Sri Lanka.

Japan is the most prominent outlier within this analysis. Japan ranks 4th on the Global Soft Power Index, driven by strong reputation, perceptions towards business and trade, education, and sustainability. Despite strong Soft Power perceptions, the nation’s economic growth is affected by many and varied influences such as the nation’s weakening currency and high inflation.

Perceptions towards Business & Trade support GDP growth

We narrowed down the analysis from the relationship between the Global Soft Power Index score and overall Nation Brand Performance, to assess the relationship perceptions have across the various pillars of Nation Brand Performance, starting with macroeconomic measures – GDP per capita and GDP growth.

The results from our two studies show that perceptions towards a nation’s Business & Trade can support macroeconomic performance. United States, Singapore, Canada, and Australia are nations that rank consistently in the top 15 globally on perceptions towards business and trade. This is also seen to reflect in their economic performance in terms of some of the highest GDP per capita globally and consistent economic growth. The outliers to this relationship are Ireland, Ukraine, Sri Lanka.

Ireland has been able to generate significantly stronger economic performance as a nation with one of the highest GDP per capita globally and continuously outperforms the rest of the Eurozone in terms of economic growth, despite not ranking as high on perceptions towards Business & Trade.

Ukraine and Sri Lanka, on the other hand are nations, who have not been able to effectively convert their perceptions towards Business & Trade, due to various unprecedented economic crises affecting them.

Talent attraction is driven by strong education systems

Predictive power of Soft Power in driving a nation’s performance was further narrowed to look at talent.

Attracting talent into a country plays a key role in building future prosperity and global competitiveness. Students looking for renowned education programmes abroad are a key target Our data proves that perceptions towards a nation’s “strong education system” can positively impact the inbound number of foreign students.

Business & Trade Perceptions x Nation Brand Performance (Economy)



United Kingdom, Canada, and Germany are nations that rank in the top 3 on global perceptions towards “strong education system” due to their global reputation, great student lifestyle, and a high standard of living.

These nations have also effectively leveraged their perceptions and are amongst the countries that attract the highest number of international students globally.

Tourism benefits from positive perceptions

The final performance pillar that we looked at was tourism. The tourism industry is a vital sector that contributes to the overall success of many economies and nations adopt strategies to leverage their tourism offering on a global platform.

Our data proves that being viewed a “great place to visit” can boost a nation’s performance on tourism. Nations that score strong on “great place to visit” such as Maldives, Switzerland, and Spain have effectively converted these perceptions into driving tourism performance within the Nation Brands rankings.

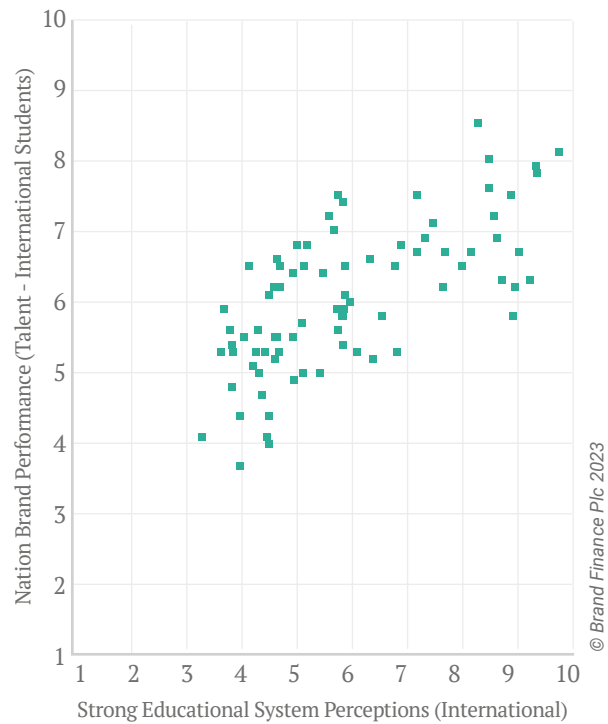
Japan and Thailand are two travel destinations that show room for further leveraging their strong perceptions to drive tourism performance. Whilst both Japan and Thailand generate strong tourism spend, arrivals per population rank lower than among competitor nations.

Leveraging Soft Power for economic performance

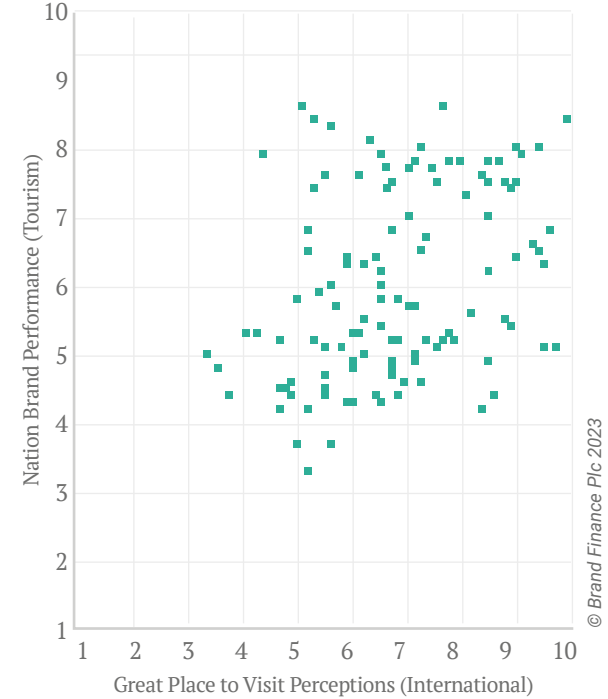
Soft Power is widely presented as an alternative to the hard power of nations. Our data and analysis across nation brand perceptions and economic performance proves a clear statistical relationship.

Soft Power generates positive impact across the pillars of economic performance and a greater understanding of a nation’s perceptions can pave the way to amplifying its impact globally.

Strong Educational System Perceptions x Nation Brand Performance (Talent - International Students)



Great Place to Visit Perceptions x Nation Brand Performance (Tourism)



Sustainability and Soft Power.



Robert Haigh
Strategy & Sustainability
Director, Brand Finance

The first commonly accepted definition of sustainability comes from the report ‘Our Common Future’, otherwise known as the Brundtland report from way back in 1987. It succinctly defines sustainability as: “Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Many sustainability issues go beyond the national scale: the atmosphere obviously transcends the border of any one nation. Emissions released in more developed countries accelerate climate change and endanger marginal agricultural communities in the global south. The illegal wildlife trade in one country risks the spread of infectious diseases on a pandemic scale. Oppressive government and instability create migratory flows that impact other countries.

A country’s commitment to sustainability therefore has clear scope to affect other actors in the international arena, be they states, corporations, communities, or publics, and consequently to influence the preferences and behavior of those actors.

A closer look at our data indicates that there is a relationship between sustainability and soft power. The analysis in Figure 1 shows the nations’ soft power scores (on the vertical axis) plotted against their score on the Sustainable Development Goal Index, an aggregate score on overall SDG progress performance based on dozens of different attributes.

Sustainable Development Goal Index x Global Soft Power Index



The relationship is not a perfect one, as clearly there are factors such as population, economic power, and cultural influence that play a role, but the correlation coefficient of 0.56 nevertheless shows that there is a clear relationship between sustainability performance and soft power.

This year we have enhanced the evaluation of sustainability in our analysis, with a new pillar to capture specific aspects of environmental sustainability - Sustainable Future..

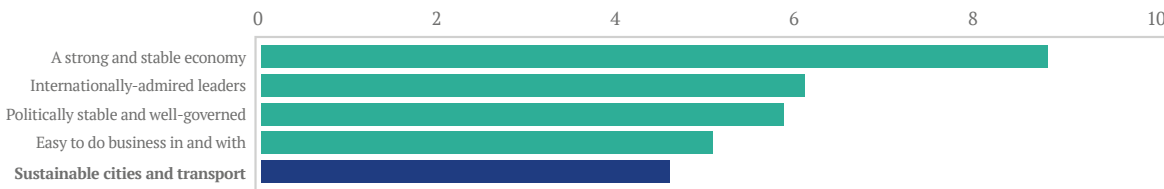
This builds on sustainability-linked attributes covered in previous years. Indeed, all of the following statements that we use to evaluate sustainability could be argued to support one or more of the UN’s sustainable development goals:

High ethical standards and low corruption; Strong educational system; Respects rule of law and human rights; Helpful to countries in need; Strong and stable economy; Politically stable and well-governed; Tolerant and inclusive; Sustainable cities and transport; Invests in green energy and technologies; Supports global efforts to counter climate change; Acts to protect the environment.

Economic and political stability are understandably core drivers of soft power, reflected in their positions as the 1st and 3rd

Top 5 Global Drivers of Reputation (Figure 2)

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most important drivers of national Reputation (Figure 2). More surprising to some will be the powerful role of ‘pure’ sustainability attributes. ‘Sustainable cities and transport’ is the 5th most powerful driver, accounting for 4.6% of influence on reputation, while ‘invests in green energy and technologies’ is the 7th strongest driver (3.9%). These have a far more powerful role than attributes such as ‘influential media’ (1.4%) and even ‘influential in diplomatic circles’ (3.8%).

Looking at some outputs from Brand Finance’s online soft power dashboard, we can see clear relationships between sustainability and other key components of soft power. For example, in terms of Reputation, we see a correlation of $r = 0.93$

This impact on Reputation would appear to have tangible effects on the application of soft power too. There is a correlation $r = 0.88$ between sustainability and influence in International Relations, and a $r = 0.92$ correlation between sustainability and Business & Trade.

The five key areas for the application of soft power are Tourism, Trade, Talent, Investment, and Diplomacy.

Sustainability in tourism and investment

Tourism is perhaps the area you will be most familiar with when it comes to national applications of sustainability.

Typically, these draw on environmental themes around connections with and immersion in well-protected natural environments, as we see from these examples with Australia using its custodianship of the Great Barrier Reef, Slovenia

and Peru drawing upon their forests, and South Africa its protection of iconic wildlife.

Nordic countries are particularly strong in both soft power and sustainability performance. They are using their reputation for sustainable development to encourage inward investment.

Finland and Iceland both concentrate on their growing role as the locus of technologies that will help to solve the climate crisis, over-consumption and other environmental sustainability concerns.

An interesting example is Costa Rica. Costa Rica has become almost synonymous with sustainable tourism but is increasingly transferring the reputation developed there to inward investment, as they say: “Nature may be Costa Rica’s best-known asset, but sustainable productivity has made it a thriving destination for foreign direct investment.”

And the process seems to be working. Costa Rica’s non-tourism exports have increased in value more than fivefold in the last 2 decades.

Sustainability in trade and talent

Sustainability has application in trade too. Denmark is another Nordic country with a strong reputation for sustainability based on having been quick to develop a renewable energy industry base and infrastructure.

For this reason, Denmark has developed an association with the wind energy industry similar to Germany’s relationship with the auto industry. That perception of national expertise continues to help brands such as Vestas to export around the world.



Sustainability is important to individuals too, and for that reason it is crucial in talent attraction.

For example, on Estonia’s talent attraction website the banner image shows its wild landscapes and 3 of the 8 reasons to move to the country are sustainability linked.

Sustainability in diplomacy

The final application of sustainability in a soft power context is diplomacy. This is particularly interesting as it is a two-way relationship, and we see national governments exercising their diplomatic soft power in order to persuade others to make commitments at major conferences such as COP21 in Paris. On the other hand, these events present an opportunity for nations, particularly the hosts, to present themselves as key diplomatic actors at the heart of events as well as leaders in sustainability.

The relative success of the Paris COP and in particular the Paris agreement create an ongoing association between the French capital and climate action.

One final observation is the soft power platform that sustainability can provide to smaller nations that might otherwise be overlooked. Small island states stand to be hit first by the worst

effects of climate change and indigenous peoples have long been sustainable custodians of their land – major environmental conferences provide a rare opportunity for their voices to be heard on the world stage.

At the 2022 Global Soft Power Summit, Helle Thorning-Schmidt made the key point that nations should be careful to ensure that their communication and applications of soft power are backed up by substance.

‘Greenwashing’ in the corporate world is increasingly coming under scrutiny from consumers and advertising law and a disconnect between perceptions and reality can present a reputational risk.

On the flipside some countries are probably not adequately recognised for their strengths on some of the SDG metrics and more investment in promotion or communication could leverage that strength.

Despite repeated use of sustainability themes in communications or reputations as national sustainability champions, many OECD countries are poorly rated on responsible consumption and climate, while African nations are some of the best performers in the world.

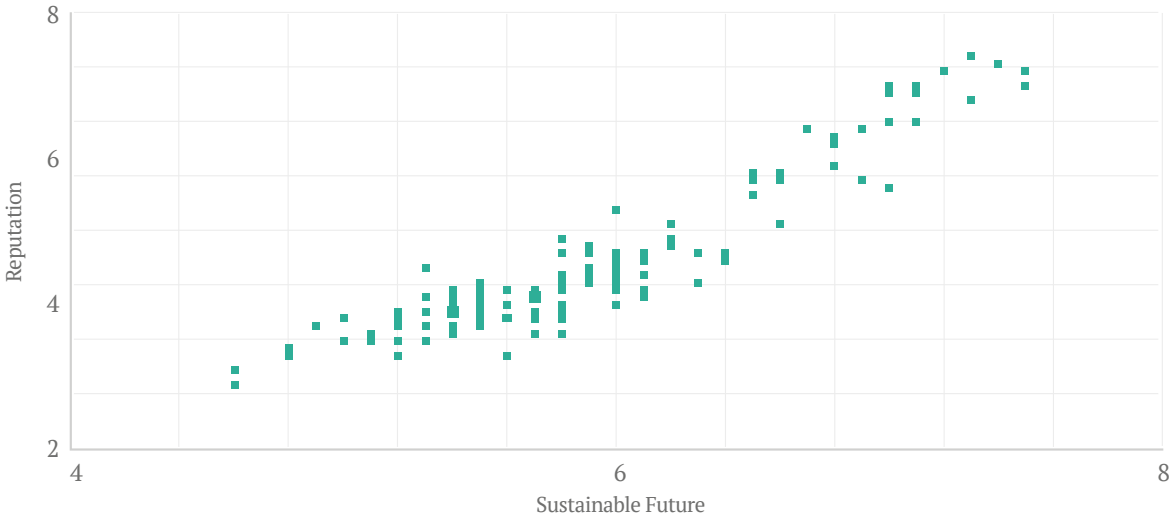
Turning to the nation brand-level results from this year’s Global Soft Power Index, Switzerland scores top on many specific measures of sustainability. for ‘high ethical standards and low corruption’ Switzerland receives the highest score of 7.03, just ahead of Japan on 6.99. Nordic countries, regular top performers on wide range of soft power metrics, also score well. Sweden is 3rd, Norway 4th, Finland 5th, and Denmark 7th (behind Canada).

For a tolerant and inclusive society, we see a similar group of countries. Canada is top, followed by the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, and Norway. The top end of the list is dominated by European and North American nations, but Japan is 17th, with South Korea in 28th. The UAE, increasingly positioning itself as a cosmopolitan, international business and tourism hub, has the highest score in MENA, placing 29th.

Some may be surprised to see that the UK receives the top score for ‘respects law and human rights’ following the UK’s complex withdrawal from the EU. It would appear that Rishi Sunak has steadied the ship sufficiently for the UK’s long-established reputation in this area not to have been affected.

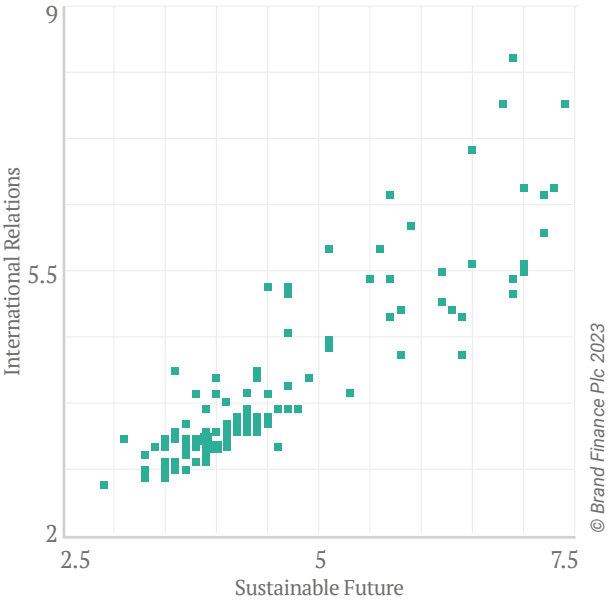
Sustainable Future x Reputation (Figure 3)

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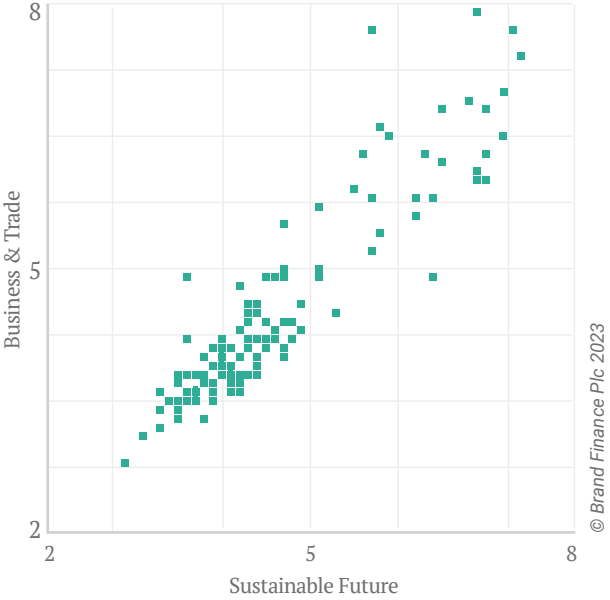


Sustainable Future x International Relations (Figure 4)

Sustainable Future x Business & Trade (Figure 5)



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This also highlights the enduring power of nation brands; short term ‘noise’ rarely appear to register at an international level in the short term, which is why nation branding campaigns must be linked to real substance and supported by long-term financial investment to have the desired effect.

The United States has the best reputation for ‘helpful to countries in need’. The US’ strong support for Ukraine may help to explain this strong performance, supported by the country’s enduring support for international institutions and development programs. As much as the US is a magnet for criticism, it is clear that global publics recognize and (in soft power terms) reward the country for its generosity.

On measures of environmental sustainability, Nordic countries again perform well. Rated on ‘acts to protect the environment’, Norway is first, followed by Sweden, Iceland, and Finland.




























‘Sustainable cities and transport’ is one of the most important sustainability-linked drivers of soft power. On this metric Japan leads, likely driven by its reputation for exceptional public transportation. Japan is followed by Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland. Interestingly the US is 5th, despite many of its cities being heavily car-dependent.

It is possible that high profile initiatives to improve the sustainability of key cities such as New York (for example the Highline project, the rollout of bike lanes, etc.) has created a halo effect for other US cities. Singapore, the UAE and Qatar also score well on this metric.

The final sustainability statement is ‘supports global efforts to counter climate change’. Here we see clear evidence of a potential misalignment between public perception and (arguably) reality. The US is top, closely followed by the UK. Both nations have been heavily involved in climate diplomacy, including the UK hosting the COP26 Glasgow climate conference and now have 2050 net zero targets. However, the contributions of the US and UK to historical carbon emissions and associated climate change have also been amongst the highest in the world.

Conversely, countries with far lower historic emissions, and a lower ongoing per capita impact today, are not getting the recognition that they deserve as stores of natural capital. There ought to be an opportunity for the likes of Sri Lanka, Zambia, Jamaica, and many more to convey the critical role they will play in the future of all nations.

Leaders in Sustainability Attributes (Figure 6)

			Metrics
			Politically stable & well-governed
			High ethical standards and low corruption
			Respects law and human rights
			Acts to protect the environment
			Tolerant and inclusive
			Sustainable cities and transport
			Invests in green energy and technologies
			Supports global efforts to counter climate change

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Do the Media Decide for Us What is Important?



Cristina Campos
Communications Director,
Brand Finance Spain

Decisions and choices are made every day based on perceptions. The media – both traditional and social – contribute powerfully to creating perceptions of things, events, brands, and places that we do not know well or which are not close to us.

The media remain the main source of information for people around the world. News portals and social media provide us with everyday information about what is happening elsewhere in the world. What we see and read in the news is regarded as "important" since it is the information on which we build our understanding of current events throughout the world. So, we can even say that the media – traditional through storytelling and social through algorithms – decide what is important and what is not. In current times of uncertainty, this information becomes a critical component of the society's functioning.

On 24th February 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic disappeared and the world, especially Europe, shifted its focus to the war between Russia and Ukraine. Overnight, Europeans stood in solidarity with the Ukrainian people. Not only do we now know exactly where the country is located, but we also know what its people are like – their customs, language, what they eat and wear. The media have been giving us a perfect X-ray of the country.

As per media psychology, the effect of mass media on the actions, manner, and contemplations of individuals and audiences is called mass media influence.

This influence can be negative or positive. It is important to how your nation is viewed abroad.

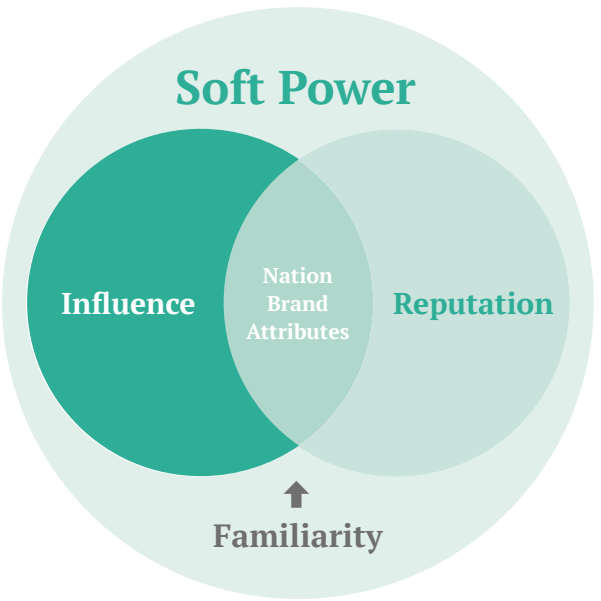
According to the 2023 ranking, Ukraine and Russia rank second only to the United States and the United Kingdom on "affairs I follow closely" and both see score movements across other attributes, hinting to a strong relationship between the share of media and Soft Power. While Russia goes up on Familiarity (10th to 8th) and Overall Influence (7th to 4th), the country's Reputation plummets (23rd to 105th) and drops in ranks on all attributes apart from "affairs I follow closely".

On the other hand, Ukraine sees impressive gains in Familiarity (47th to 15th) and Influence (45th to 19th) pointing to its success in leveraging media and Soft Power to bolster hard power, but only registers a moderate gain in Reputation (70th to 68th). While it achieves mixed performance on different nation brand attributes, the impact of the key messaging of Ukraine's wartime communications is visible in the attributes with biggest improvements: "internationally admired leaders", "respects law and human rights", "tolerant and inclusive", "leader in technology and innovation", and naturally "affairs I follow closely".

Familiarity is a proven driver of brand health and growth. In his seminal empirical analysis: How Brands Grow, Byron Sharp emphasised the need for brands to be visible and easily recalled: "A brand's mental availability refers to the probability that a buyer will notice, recognise and/or think of a brand in buying situations. It depends on the quality and quantity of memory structures related to the brand". This conclusion applies equally to place brands.

The Global Soft Power Index provides an overall score of a nation's Soft Power, thanks to measuring both its Reputation and Influence, with a wide range of nation brands attributes driving performance in both these KPIs. The third KPI – Familiarity – enables stakeholders to form their perceptions in the first place.

Developing Soft Power requires of nations to be visible, familiar, and relevant – be a part of people's lives. Familiarity and Influence are



clearly correlated: If you 'know a country well', you are more likely to perceive it as influential in your life.

Over time we have found some repeating patterns in terms of Familiarity and how this impacts the nation brands in the ranking:

- + **Size matters:** Even a well-regarded small nation – e.g. Singapore – ranks relatively low for Familiarity. As with commercial brands, lack of 'physical and mental availability' handicaps smaller nation brands. In that context, overperformers are Switzerland, Israel, and New Zealand. Underperformers include Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Nigeria – big, non-European nations.
- + **Tourism** appears to boost Familiarity, helping countries such as Egypt, Greece, and Thailand.
- + **Geographic variation** – nation brand Familiarity is more variable geographically than Reputation or perceived nation brand attributes. A country like Algeria is very familiar to its neighbours, but its Reputation is relatively poor in all countries.



Sports and Soft Power.



Hugo Hensley
Head of Sports Services,
Brand Finance

In 2022, sports was a key topic that brought the concept of Soft Power into the public consciousness, and further spread the idea that nations might use sport intentionally to build influence and reputation.

The year started with the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic games – which saw media discussion about human rights in China and diplomatic boycotts from some western nations – and finished with the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. This brought one of the world’s biggest sporting

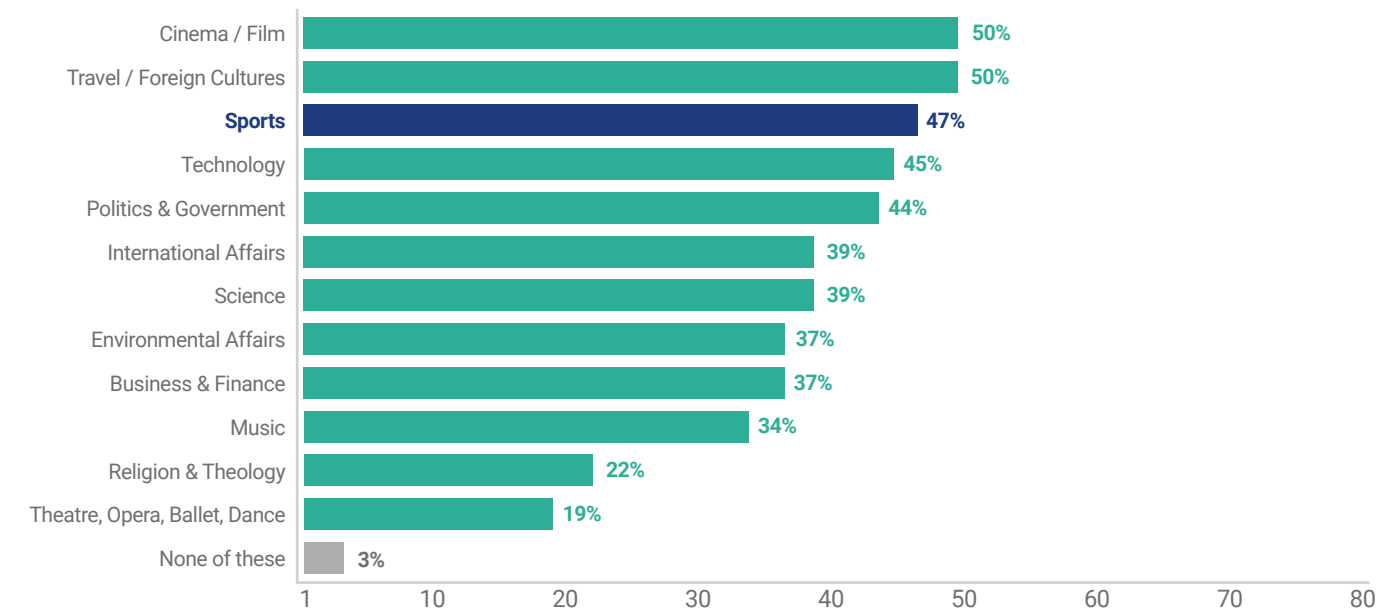
events to an Arab nation for the first time, for an undoubtedly exciting tournament, but also greater scrutiny of regional differences in the rights of citizens and migrant workers. 2022 brought into public conversation the importance and influence of sport, and whether it can and should be shared with countries that have different values, allowing them to piggyback on the good vibes that sporting mega-events can bring.

It is obvious that sport is a topic that cannot be ignored – globally 47% of respondents to the GSPI research study are interested in sports, behind only Cinema/Film and Travel/Foreign Cultures (both 50%); and it claims a wider audience than many other key Soft Power factors such as business, science, politics, environment, and technology.

However, interest can vary widely – football (soccer) is the most popular sport globally, with 75% of Thai respondents claiming to follow, ahead of 73% of Brazilians; it leads in most markets, however some major population centres have other favourites – India (cricket), China (basketball), and USA (American Football).

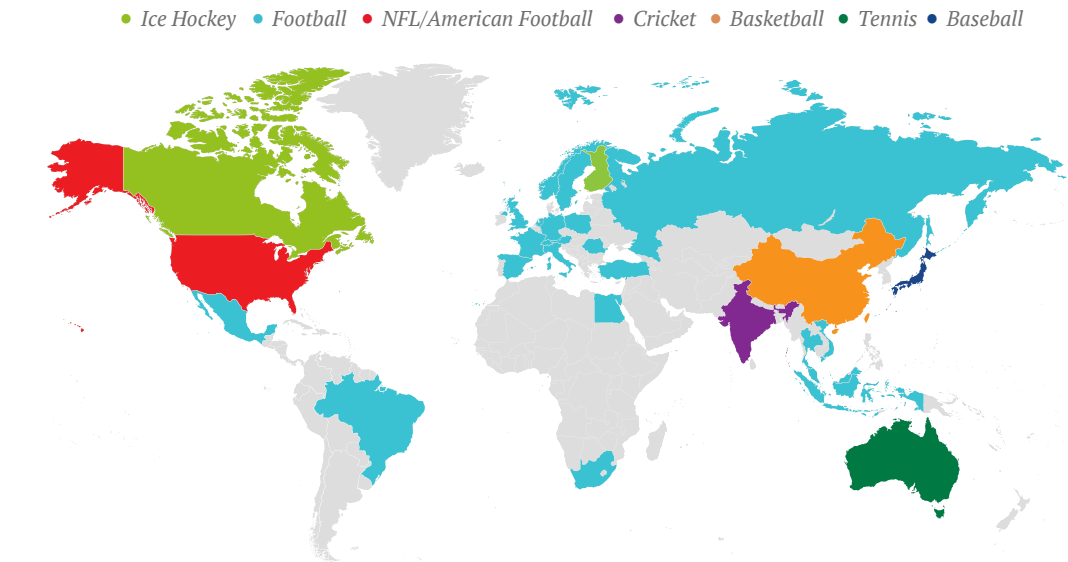
Which of These Topics Interest You?

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Favourite Sport by Market

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Sport can also build relationships between nations, and although it shares causation with other values and historic factors, playing the same sport is shown to have strong correlation with familiarity and perceived influence of a nation.

For example, South Africa, winners of the 2019 Rugby World Cup, rank 7th in Familiarity and 16th in influence among New Zealanders, compared to 28th and 31th respectively among the global sample. The same follows for India, which scores strongly for Influence among respondents in the Caribbean compared to non-cricket playing nations, with a significant difference visible even between Caribbean nations which are members of the West Indies Cricket Team and those that are not.

Although it is clear that sport has exposure to huge audiences around the world, it is not a direct driver of a nation’s Soft Power. The attribute “leaders in sport” is not a driver of Reputation or Influence.

The high exposure of sporting events mean that they act primarily as a platform from which other values and attributes can be showcased – such as “sustainable cities and transport” (a strong driver of reputation) or Culture & Heritage attributes (“arts and entertainment” is a key driver of Influence).

However, linked directly to exposure and media content is the insight that “a country whose affairs I follow closely” is strongly correlated to Influence, showing how mega-events that bring a lot of attention can cause a boost in Influence in this manner.































Returning to the biggest sporting Soft Power story of the past year, the Qatar 2022 World Cup, we see that the nation has improved on many dimensions. While all GCC nations increased Soft Power performance this year, Qatar leaps forward to the 25th place on Reputation (+5 ranks) and to the 14th place on Influence (+7 ranks) while other GCC nations gain less.

Nation Brand	Market of research	Global Soft Power Index	Familiarity	Reputation	Influence
India	Jamaica	16th	8th	26th	12th
	Dominican Republic	29th	17th	29th	25th

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'Leaders in Sport' - Ranking and Score

Rank		Nation Brand	Score
1		Brazil	6.4
2		United States	6.1
3		Germany	5.5
4		Argentina	5.4
5		Spain	5.2
6		United Kingdom	4.7
7		France	4.2
8		Italy	4
9		Portugal	4
10		Russia	3.7
11		Jamaica	3.5
12		China	3.4
13		Cameroon	3.3
14		Uruguay	3.1
15		Australia	3.1
16		Senegal	3.1
17		Kenya	3
18		Netherlands	3
19		South Africa	2.9
20		Canada	2.9
21		Nigeria	2.9
22		Japan	2.8
23		Cote d'Ivoire	2.8
24		Qatar	2.8
25		Ghana	2.7
26		Croatia	2.6
27		Belgium	2.6
28		Ethiopia	2.6
29		Sweden	2.5
30		Norway	2.4

It should be noted that the research was conducted before the World Cup, while much of western media was suggesting an exercise in 'sportwashing', criticising FIFA for corruption in awarding the hosting to Qatar, and raising issues around conditions and treatment of migrant workers who had built the stadiums and infrastructure.

Following the excitement of the football on show, and the praise for a well-run and welcoming tournament in the small nation, it is likely that the scores will rise even further next year.

The issues raised and influence gained will not necessarily endure if the platform is not used to communicate the values of the nation, however, ownership in European football (Paris Saint Germain, and a bid for Manchester United) and a global sports broadcasting network (beIN Sports) suggest Qatar is focused on sport as a key lever for boosting Soft Power on an on-going basis.

The lesson for countries, cities, regions, royal families, or tech leaders looking to boost their reputation through ownership or engagement in sports is that sport alone is not going to deliver the desired influence, but it will highlight the existing attributes and values that can impact the perceptions and decisions of a wide range of stakeholders, and ultimately build Soft Power.



04 Nation Brand Spotlights

What does Soft Power look like around the world?

- Australia
- Brazil
- Canada
- France
- Germany
- India
- Ireland
- Italy
- Interview with Italian Trade Agency
- Interview with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Interview with New Zealand Story
- Interview with PROMPERÚ
- Romania
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Interview with Brand South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- Interview with Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing
- Sweden
- Interview with Swedish Institute
- United States



Mark Crowe
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Australia

Australia has again performed consistently across a number of attributes in the Global Soft Power Index, with a top ten ranking for familiarity and reputation. Overall, the country's Soft Power score has improved by 1.9 points this year, a cumulative increase of 5.7 points since 2020.

With the world re-opening after COVID, merely standing still causes a relative fall in performance. Australia continues to perform well for Business and Trade underpinned by a strong and stable economy, while enjoying an enviable reputation as being a great place to visit. A more attractive tax structure for business investment will help alleviate the decline in future growth potential. In these areas, Australia's absolute score improved, but relative ranking decreased due to bigger improvements by other nations.

Aligned with Australia's status as attractive place to do business, the country is recognised for its governance, during a period of high global political instability, in terms of being perceived to be relatively well governed with high ethical standards. This extends to favourable perceptions towards media and communication, with a 5th place ranking for being 'easy to communicate with'.

The gradual return to international travel has witnessed a pickup in several areas covered under 'Culture and Heritage' and 'People and Values'. Strong preventative measures along with a strict quarantine approach to the pandemic had previously created negative perceptions in terms of restrictions in movement and impact on the economy.

This year has seen an uptick in that Australia is viewed very favourably as a great place to visit with an appealing lifestyle. Strong investment in tourism should see Australia's reputation in these categories continue to rise.

In particular a return to previous international student numbers should be an imperative, especially when Australia is highly respected for its strong educational system.

Conversely, Australia's lowest rankings under 'Culture and Heritage' are for attributes pertaining to a rich heritage and food the world loves.

While Australia is perceived favourably for protection of the environment, despite a strong reliance on exporting natural resources including fossil fuels, there is an opportunity for Australia to take a lead role in developing sustainable cities and investment in green energy.

Australia continues to enjoy an enviable well-earned reputation across many Soft Power attributes. A more attractive investment environment along with a concerted effort to further lift scores where Australia has traditional strength should facilitate a return to being a top ten ranked nation brand.





Eduardo Chaves
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Brazil

Brand Finance's Global Soft Power Index 2023 ranking places Brazil 31st, a drop of three positions from the previous year. Despite a small increase in its Soft Power score from 43.4 to 46.2, this indicates that other countries are recognizing the value of their brands in generating business, tourism, and international relations at a faster speed than Brazil. Evaluating brands is a useful management tool.

Brazil is the 5th largest country in the world by area, covering more than 8.5 million square kilometres, and the 6th largest by population, with approximately 220 million inhabitants. It has been a democratic republic since 1989. Given its size and other attributes, getting to know Brazil is relatively easy.

The Brazil brand ranks 12th in the familiarity dimension, a position unchanged since 2021. Due to its size, Brazil finds it easier to leverage familiarity than smaller countries, but there is still potential to improve the Brazil country brand abroad. The country brand logo underwent a redesign in 2018, and this year the logo reverted to the previous design. These sudden changes, possibly due to political pressure, can reduce the effectiveness of Brazil's communication efforts. Nevertheless, Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina are the only Latin American brands among the top 30 in the familiarity index.

The Brazil brand maintains its 31st position in the reputation KPI, with a score increase of 0.2 points, but this wasn't enough to improve its ranking. Despite this, Brazil has a strong global reputation, which protects it from short-term fluctuations and specific actions. However, no Latin American brands appear in the top 30 in this category.

In the influence dimension, the Brazil brand fell to 26th position, dropping seven places since the 2022 assessment. Although the Brazil brand influence index score increased by 0.1

points, other countries had a better performance, leading to the decline in Brazil's position. Last year's focus on presidential elections and internal politics likely contributed to Brazil's weaker influence.

The Brazilian elections also highlighted opportunities for improvement in areas such as economics, taxes, logistics, and exchange rates. Many proposals for improvement were made, suggesting the potential for the influence index to further evolve. In the KPI business and trade, the Brazil brand fell nine positions to 38th place. Although the brand score increased by 0.6 points, it wasn't sufficient to improve its ranking.

Exposure to positive or negative news shapes a country's image, affecting its familiarity. Unfortunately, Brazil has been associated with predominantly negative news over the last year, such as poor public health management during the pandemic, human rights violations, Amazon deforestation, and foreign policy issues.

In the governance dimension, the Brazil brand dropped 28 positions to 86th place compared to the 2022 assessment. Although Brazil's score in this attribute increased by 0.7 points, it still has a long way to go to reach the top positions.

Brazil's government has taken a severe political stance, resulting in the country becoming more closed off in recent years.

This has led to problems in International Relations, lack of flexibility in dealings, and isolation from the world. In the international relations dimension, the Brazil brand dropped 10 places to 41st position, compared to the 2022 ranking of 31st place. Although the Brazil brand grew by 0.6 in this pillar, it was not enough to improve its ranking. A globalized, flexible policy that aligns with democratic values is needed to help Brazil in this area.



Brazil's strongest dimension in its country brand is culture and heritage, maintaining its 9th position in the 2022 assessment. The positive growth of 0.9 points in the score was enough to maintain the same position as before. Given Brazil's diverse mix of people and rich cultural heritage, it's not surprising that this is its top-performing dimension.

However, in the people and values dimension, the Brazil brand fell from 19th to 25th position, losing 6 places despite growing by 0.7 points. Other country brands have shown even greater growth in this dimension, resulting in Brazil's relative decline.

The Brazil brand's position in the media and communication dimension also suffered, falling by 17 places to the 43rd position. Although the brand only had a slight decrease of 0.1 points, this caused a significant drop in the competitive and dynamic country brand market. The ongoing conflict between the government and the media, along with the rise of fake news, has led to constant questioning of the media. However, Brazil has demonstrated that it has an independent and free media.

The country brand Brazil experienced a significant drop in the education and science key performance indicator, falling from 35th to 73rd position in 2023.

The score in this category also dropped by 0.3 points. While Brazil has great potential for education initiatives, there has been a lack of investment in this area over the last year. Despite having the best university in Latin America, the University of São Paulo, education in Brazil remains concentrated in a small portion of the population. Government incentives are necessary to improve basic education in the country and support Brazil's development in the future.

In the sustainability indicator, the country brand Brazil is ranked 55th, with a score of 4.3 points. The top-ranking countries score 7.0, leaving Brazil with significant room for improvement in this category. As a country with areas of great importance for tourism, pharmaceuticals, and biodiversity, Brazil needs to pay attention to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) actions to improve its position in the ranking.

Among the 120 nations ranked, there are 17 other Latin American countries included in the ranking, including Brazil (31st), Argentina (42nd), Mexico (44th), Chile (54th), Colombia (58th), Uruguay (63rd), Cuba (66th), Panama (70th), Costa Rica (72nd), Paraguay (75th), Peru (76th), Dominican Republic (81st), Bolivia (82nd), Ecuador (90th), Honduras (104th), Venezuela (106th), Trinidad and Tobago (118th), and Guatemala (120th).



Alexandre St-Amour
Client Services Manager,
Brand Finance Canada

Canada has once again topped the Soft Power Index, outperforming other countries relative to its population size. Specifically, Canada ranks second in the Reputation pillar.

Despite having higher corporate tax rates compared to its southern neighbour, international business experts scored Canada second highest in ease of doing business in and with the country.

Canada is also perceived as having a strong and stable economy globally, even though the nation has experienced a lot of societal and economic changes over the past year. Rising inflation, uncertainty, and housing unaffordability have made the domestic situation difficult for Canada, but international perceptions of the country paint a different picture. It could be that Canadians are not prone to boasting or are simply comfortable with their country's stability, but domestic perceptions have consistently scored lower than foreign perceptions.

In summary, Canada is perceived to have a strong liberal economy, and despite higher corporate tax rates, it remains easy to do business in and with the country. Though the nation has experienced many changes over the past year, it continues to be viewed as having a stable economy globally. While domestic perceptions of Canada may be lower than foreign scores, the country remains at the top of the Soft Power Index.

Canada's reputation for its lifestyle is strong internationally, but it falls short in other areas of the Culture & Heritage pillar. For example, it ranks in the middle of the pack in terms of having a rich heritage, and despite poutine and maple syrup being well-known as Canadian cuisine, the country's overall score for "food the world loves" is only average.

On the other hand, Canada is highly regarded for Governance and International Relations.

Despite facing political challenges related to the "Freedom Convoy" and controversial government measures, Canada still ranks third in terms of political stability and effective governance. Additionally, the country is well-regarded for being safe, secure, and respectful of the law and human rights, which reflects Canada's image as a welcoming and diverse country.

Canada is known for actively participating in international discussions, especially concerning human rights and reducing trade barriers. Despite the country's economic struggles over the past year, Canada remains committed to investing more in developing economies.

Canada's reputation as a friendly and helpful country to those in need still shines through, and the country has been dedicated to developing international relations through multilateral forums for the last 50 years.

Canada is a founding member of organizations like the United Nations, NATO, G7, Commonwealth of Nations, and an observer in various other forums such as ASEAN and the Council of Europe. As a result of these efforts, Canada's Soft Power is strong in this area, and foreign perceptions reflect this work.

Foreign perceptions of Canadian values continue to include the stereotype of the friendly Canadian, which is seen as a positive attribute. In 2023, these perceptions resulted in Canadians being highly rated for their friendliness, generosity, trustworthiness, and tolerance.

Despite ongoing uncertainty affecting Canadians, it is important to take pride in how we are perceived internationally and work towards making those perceptions a reality for everyone.



Bertrand Chovet
Managing Director,
Brand Finance France

France is ranked 6th in the Global Soft Power Index 2023, and its overall index score has improved by 1.8 points to reach 62.4 out of 100. Although China remains ahead of France, it is regressing, while Germany and Japan are growing less, and the UK and US are outpacing France in GSPI growth.

France's reputation score is stable this year, thanks to the re-election of President Macron in April 2022, which has brought continuity and confidence from abroad. However, the country is facing ongoing challenges and oppositions at the local level, especially concerning modernization and reforms like the pension system.

Despite this, France is perceived as politically stable and well-governed, and with perception of the leadership of Emmanuel Macron increasing from 4.2 points in 2022 to 5.2 points for 'internationally admired leaders,' which is crucial to sustain France's global reputation.

However, France's Familiarity score has remained steady, and its Overall Influence score has fallen by 0.1 points. Although France is still well-known and comes after the USA and UK in terms of familiarity, its presence is being diluted by increasing news coverage of other nations like Ukraine and Qatar. The Paris 2024 Olympic Games could help increase familiarity if they are managed properly.

Although France's Culture and Heritage backgrounds and components still give it leading influence, its overall influence is decreasing. This is due to a lower influence in diplomatic circles and a lack of vision and leadership in Europe and beyond, leading to polarization. While France's Soft Power is growing more than Germany's, it is still less than the UK's, and the gap between them remains significant.

France is also still not seen as an easy country to do business with, although its Business and Trade score has improved from 6.3 to 6.8. Although France is making progress as a leader in technology and innovation, its Education & Science score has dropped from 5.5 to 4.7.

France receives high scores for overall familiarity, international relations, and Culture & Heritage, ranking 2nd in Arts & Entertainment, Food, and Tourism. The country's attractive lifestyle and inspiring culture are embodied by leading luxury brands.

However, France faces barriers to change and transformational objectives both nationally and internationally, which may affect its Soft Power influence. Despite this, France is becoming more attractive to foreign investors, with initiatives from Bpifrance, Business France, and Atout France.

The country ranked first in the 2020 EY Attractiveness Barometer for the most attractive country for foreign investors in Europe, with 1,197 projects, up 17% year-on-year. However, France's Business & Trade score in the 2023 Global Soft Power Index is slightly down, indicating a need for improvement in this area.

France's reputation remains stable, but its influence is declining, and it faces challenges in mobilizing other nations to tackle the fundamentals of a sustainable world. While France is standing up for climate issues, there is a need to push for better perceptions in Business & Trade to avoid losing its Soft Power advantage in the future.





Germany



Rank **#3** ← #3
Score **65.8**/100 **+1.2**



Ulf-Brün Drechsel
Managing Director,
Brand Finance DACH

In last year's edition of the Global Soft Power Index, I discussed the significant political changes happening in Germany. This included Germany's handling of the Covid pandemic, the end of Angela Merkel's 16-year reign, and the start of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine, which is only 1,500 km away from the German border. However, this year's Global Soft Power Index shows that Germany has demonstrated high resilience and stability, and continues to be perceived very well. Germany has maintained its third-place position in the Global Soft Power Index, increasing its absolute score by 1.2 points.

The nation achieved the highest score in the new pillar "Sustainability Future", while Germany's scores in the "Governance" pillar have improved, and Germany's score on people & values increased from 4.2 to 4.8.

The results show that Germany is the most well regarded nation in the areas of sustainability and governance. It is also among the top three countries in "International Relations" and "Media and Communication". Germany is the fourth highest country in terms of reputation and "business & trade", and fifth best in the key metric of overall influence.

Overall, Germany's position in the GSPI Index 2023 is impressive and reflects its ability to maintain its stability despite the challenges it has faced. The nation's focus on sustainability and good governance has helped it to become a leader in these areas. Germany's high ranking in other pillars of the GSPI 2023 also reflects its strong reputation, economy, and influence.

Germany's ability to maintain its high Soft Power influence despite the challenges it has faced demonstrates its reliability and stability as a nation. In comparison to other top nations such as the USA, China, Japan, and the UK, which may react more unpredictably during times of crisis, Germany has proven to be a consistent and dependable leader in the Soft Power arena. Germany's

performance in the GSPI Index 2023 reinforces its status as one of the most stable and esteemed Soft Power nations in the world.

In 2022, the triple threat of fuel supply disruption, goods supply disruption and labour supply disruption, and the ongoing war in Ukraine, triggered a series of crises that many industrial nations, including Germany, will have to face. As the strongest economy in Europe, a leading political power, and a major world trading partner, Germany faces several specific challenges.

Firstly, there is an energy crisis caused by the immediate exit from dependence on Russian oil and gas, while simultaneously transitioning away from coal and nuclear towards renewables. This presents a significant challenge for Germany.

Secondly, an economic crisis is emerging due to rising inflation, sanctions against Russia, and sanctions against China. Additionally, the refugee crisis, caused by the admission of over a million Ukrainian war refugees within a few months, coupled with the continuing challenges of the integration of over a million refugees and migrants from 2015 and 2016, is increasingly burdening society, the state, and municipalities.

Moreover, there is a significant housing shortage with 700,000 social housing units missing, and a demographically induced labour shortage, which is impeding economic growth and exacerbating social conflicts. Rising inflation, rent and energy costs, and daily consumption are exacerbating the impoverishment of the lower working class and even spreading to the middle class.

Furthermore, along with the US and the UK, Germany is providing significant military support and arms supplies to Ukraine and has initiated a massive militarisation. All these factors will gradually make Germany a hard power nation again in the medium term. The era of cross-bloc moderating and passive neutrality has come to an end for Germany.



Ajimon Francis
Managing Director,
Brand Finance India

India's consistent GDP growth above 6% in spite of global slowdown and geopolitical issues is a remarkable achievement. In fact, India is the 7th most valuable nation brand, as per Brand Finance's 2023 Nation Brands report.

However, India ranks only 28th in the Soft Power ranking, indicating that there is room for improvement in terms of its Soft Power influence. India is already taking steps in this direction by assuming the presidency of the G20, a group of powerful nations that focuses on improving global economic governance and architecture.

Moreover, India has transitioned from a net importer to become an exporter and humanitarian aid supporter for developing countries.

India excels in several Soft Power dimensions. For instance, it is the 2nd most attractive destination for future growth potential. India also ranks 5th in the influential arts and entertainment category due to its diverse film, classical music, dance, and folk repertoire.

Furthermore, Indian curries, recipes, and varieties are global favourites, ranking India 8th in the powerful influence of food and cuisine.

Finally, India's contributions to science, technology, and space exploration have earned it a place among the top 14th and 9th ranks, respectively. In conclusion, India is punching way above its weight in several important Soft Power dimensions.

The Indian brand is an interesting mix of traditional cultural, culinary, and heritage strengths, along with cutting-edge advancements in science, space, and economic growth potential.

However, to improve its global perception, India's brand custodians must examine certain aspects like media independence, security for tourists, engaging with locals, governance parameters, and post-COVID sustainability initiatives. While many of these initiatives are already in progress, they need to be amplified to improve the global view of brand India.

Despite these challenges, India remains a land of opportunity with a stable democracy and impressive advancements in technology. It offers rich cultural experiences, delicious food, and vibrant art. In conclusion, a powerful poem from Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore's Gitanjali aptly sums up India's allure:

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high

Where knowledge is free

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments

By narrow domestic walls

Where words come out from the depth of truth..."

A century old poetic articulation of Soft Power that a nation must nurture.





Ireland



Rank **#29** ↑ #30
Score **46.7**/100 **+4.8**



Simon Haigh
Agent,
Brand Finance Ireland

The Republic of Ireland is a small country with a population of just over five million. But it has a diaspora of 80 million people with Irish heritage scattered across the globe, particularly concentrated in the United Kingdom, Australia, United States of America, Canada, New Zealand, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and across Europe.

Soon after our 2023 Global Soft Power Summit is St Patrick’s Day. Tourism Ireland, with the support of Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs, helps to turn the world green on March 17 every year.

Ireland’s ministers take part in a long-held Irish custom - they are sent to all corners of the globe to evangelise Ireland on the world stage – a perfect opportunity for global reach. Several hundred buildings in dozens of countries are illuminated in the green of Ireland on this special day for Ireland.

While overseas, Ireland’s ministers will engage with their diaspora and host functions for the travel trade – all of which helps to amplify Ireland’s story and exercises the Soft Power of Ireland.

This also gives the whole world a chance to stop and think all things Ireland and the Irish – not an unpleasant opportunity, with Brand Finance’s Soft Power research finding that the people of Ireland are considered to be among the most charitable, generous and fun.

As we said in our 2022 Global Soft Power Index:

“Ireland has a long history of global flows of people, knowledge and money. There are thousands of Irish organisations around the world connecting back to Ireland while enabling cross-cultural interchanges. Ireland constantly develops relationships around the world whether it be for business, sport, culture, education, tourism or other activity. Ireland is seen as a world leader in these spaces.”

It is no surprise that Ireland has consolidated its position in the top 30 of national Soft Power rankings, rising one places to 29th place this year.

Given the current global geo-political challenges, Ireland’s role as a global leader for diaspora engagement and cross-cultural co-operation remains clear and extremely strong. Ireland’s Soft Power continues to be seen as a benchmark Soft Power for diaspora engagement and better cultural understanding. The world loves to turn green on March 17 each year.



Massimo Pizzo
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Italy

Italy has been ranked ninth in the 2023 Brand Finance Global Soft Power ranking, thanks to its strengthening position and Russia's fall. Italy's success can be attributed to its reputation, influence, and familiarity with people around the world.

Additionally, Italy's cultural heritage is highly regarded, placing it third in the world, behind Greece and Egypt. Its cuisine is also popular, with Italian food being the most loved globally, followed by French and Mexican cuisine.

From a tourism perspective, Italy is among the top four most attractive countries, only surpassed by the Maldives, Switzerland, and France. When it comes to arts and entertainment, Italy performs exceptionally well, ranking fourth globally, after the USA, France, and the UK. Although Italy's lifestyle is viewed positively, it falls short of that of nine other countries, including Switzerland, Canada, and the USA.

Italian people are highly regarded for their fun, sociability, and generosity, but they lose points when it comes to trust and tolerance & inclusiveness. In terms of business and trade efficiency, Italy performs well, thanks to its popular products and brands, which are only surpassed by those of the USA and Japan.

However, Italy struggles in terms of ease of doing business, with a relatively weak and unstable economy and poor growth potential. In fact, Italy ranks on par with France and is surpassed by many other nations.

Italy's international relations are viewed positively, particularly with other countries, where it ranks among the top three along with Switzerland and Canada. While interest in Italian affairs is quite high, trust in the Italian media is relatively low, despite its perceived influence.

Italy's perceived weaknesses lie in governance, education & science, and sustainability, all of which present opportunities for improvement. However, Italy also boasts strengths in areas such as culture & heritage and people & values that are difficult for other countries to surpass.

This suggests that Italy has significant potential for growth in governance and education & science, where progress is more achievable. In contrast, some countries have already reached their maximum potential, leaving little room for further improvement.



Interview with Italian Trade Agency.



Giovanni Sacchi
Director, Italian Trade
Agency London



Italy has the leading number of protected foods among all European countries with consortiums set up to regulate these protected foods. What role does the authenticity of these PDO products have in increasing Italy's value as a nation brand?

There is widespread confidence that products associated with a geographical area have now become a key factor for the development of the local culture, economy, and agriculture. The characteristics that are linked to products from these geographical locations offer consumers the guarantee that they are buying authentic products that have a rich heritage, as well as enhancing the work of the local producers and protecting the product against imitations and unfair competition.

The PDO status is awarded to products of excellence that express a close tie to its territory of origin and follow specific production regulations to create quality. Italian PDO products play a huge role in Italy's value as a nation brand, as it has the most amount of GI and PDO products in Europe. Italy has 842 products with a Geographical Indication status, and 581 that have been awarded with Protected Designation of Origin status. These products contribute to 21% of exports in the Italian food-farming industry – a historical record in exports in 2021.

As a nation brand, Italy is perceived as a country with strong affiliations with its ancient culinary culture that has continuously inspired gastronomical trends around the world.

This reputation has been built over a long period of time. More than ever, we are more aware about sustainability and the sourcing of our food. Consumers are willing to look for the best and sieve out what is good for them.

Made in Italy continues to be a guarantee of quality in the food and wine industries, as it showcases the passion and expertise that is so often associated with Italy. Products such as Prosciutto di Parma, Parmigiano Reggiano, and Mozzarella di Bufala, all of which have PDO status, have not changed their production methods for generations and therefore have contributed to creating and shaping the image of Italian cuisine and its nation brand status. This goes to show that PDO products are key to enhancing Italy as an influential and familiar nation.

Italy has a rich tradition of food production, and in recent years has seen a boom in innovation as the demand for a more sustainable approach to agriculture has increased. What leverage will sustainability in Italian agribusiness have on building Italy's reputation and what is the ITA doing to help promote this?

The impact of climate change has brought the value of agribusiness to the forefront of international discussions - and Italy is spearheading conversations around sustainability and innovation. Currently, Italy leads the way in circular economy and champions efficiency on green matters and quality.

Italy's favourable climate and agronomic conditions provide a rich biodiversity to deliver high-quality fruits and vegetables globally. The country has long been known as a leader in organic agriculture and has one of the highest levels of eco-labels and EMAS in the EU, giving sustainability an enormous amount of leverage on the country's reputation.

The ITA have just launched a new campaign in the UK, 'La Verde Vita' which will focus on the promotion of sustainability in Italian Food and Wine products within the UK. Our aim will be to showcase Italian products as



examples of the value and quality that Italian agribusiness confers upon these products. This value is highlighted not only in the rigorous standards relating to production methods, inspections, and protected products, but also in the increase in value of Italian cultural heritage, in the promotion of the diversity, tradition, and uniqueness of agricultural production, and in the maintenance of rural spaces – all of which lead towards sustainability. We hope that this campaign will bring awareness to how crucial sustainability will be in the progression of Italy as a leading nation brand.

Italy is a nation that prides itself on being a leader in creating high quality food and wine products. Do you think food being a major contributor to the global carbon footprint could jeopardise Italy's reputation as a leading nation brand?

For a long time, Italy has prided itself on being a nation that has been highly responsive towards the global climate crisis and has taken significant steps to stop its contribution to the global carbon footprint which has helped stabilise its reputation as a leading nation brand.

Over the recent years, Italy has shown great improvements and leadership in achieving its goals towards sustainability. As a nation we have taken significant

steps to increase renewable resources in supply chains, reduce carbon emissions, and pay greater attention to the issue of consumption.

In Italy's' national recovery and resilience plan, there is €62 billion (of which €41 billion from the Recovery and Resilience Facility) earmarked for infrastructure projects under the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy security supervision, including investments in rail infrastructure and low-emission public transport, digitalisation, and housing.

Acting sustainably and being seen to do so is imperative for all Italian food and wine brands, which contributes to Italy's overall reputation. Italy is well known for its traditional production methods and foods that are sustainably grown and developed, with recipes being handed down through generations of passion and love for food.

Reducing food waste and reusing food has long been common practice in Italy. Although there are still improvements to be made, Italy has laid out the right steps in order to achieve a high sustainability status, built from its deep-rooted respect for authentic productions and local, organic farming.



Interview with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kazakhstan.



Roman Vassilenko

Deputy Minister of
Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has gone up from 88th to 79th in the Brand Finance Global Soft Power Index 2023. How has Kazakhstan grown its reputation as a nation, especially in the wake of the civil unrest and the war in Ukraine?

We are delighted to hear about the growth in the Global Soft Power Index! We see this because of constant work of many people, including on implementing reforms to build a just and fair Kazakhstan. Our country has always strived to promote peace and global cooperation and we have built a reputation for contributing to the resolution of global issues.

Over the past year, we have doubled down on our international commitments by hosting key global summits, including the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia and the 7th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

As a nation in the heart of Eurasia between East and West, we feel it is our duty to promote cooperation between all sides. We intend to continue to enhance our reputation through action as a key facilitator of global trade, collaborations and peacekeeping. Undoubtedly, the success of our athletes, artists, and talented youth also contributed to strengthening Kazakhstan's reputation.

Kazakhstan performs well within the Education & Science pillar, especially in the context of space exploration. What role does science and education play in the future growth of Kazakhstan and how do you communicate this abroad?

In a highly technological and rapidly developing world, education and science are indispensable. Due to increasing globalisation, we view education as an exchange of ideas

and best practices. That is why we continue to offer scholarships through the "Bolashak" (Future) programme to students from Kazakhstan to study overseas, all-expenses paid. We are also delighted that the number of foreign students in Kazakhstan has been increasing every year in part thanks to our scholarship programmes for foreign students and the growing reputation of Kazakh universities. Likewise, scientific development has a direct impact on the competitiveness of any country. That is why we almost doubled state funding for science over the past two years and will triple that funding for research over the next three years, and why we introduced new grants, particularly for young Kazakh scientists, for whom we have high hopes.

As a country beginning to lead in sustainability, what is the importance of these developments when it comes to nation brand building?

While Kazakhstan has historically relied on fossil fuels for its economic development, we are now working to decarbonise our economy and promote clean energy sources by harnessing the country's renewable energy potential, particularly wind and solar. We have set an ambitious goal to reach carbon neutrality by 2060. Kazakhstan is also working with our international partners to develop supplies of green hydrogen and raw materials to manufacture equipment such as wind turbines and batteries for electric cars. Kazakhstan is one of only few places on earth where large-scale production of green hydrogen is possible. We hope that our growing reputation as a nation that is managing to shift from fossil fuels to a green economy will encourage other countries to follow suit.





Kenya



Rank **#100** ↓ #95
Score **35.0**/100 +5.5



Walter Serem
Valuation Manager,
Brand Finance Kenya

Kenya's Soft Power is rooted in its history, culture, and diplomacy, and this year's Global Soft Power Index rated Kenya as 100th globally – a very low ranking, but with opportunity for future growth.

Kenya's Soft Power is influenced by its diversity, natural resources, vibrant music and arts scene, and its contributions to regional peace and stability.

Kenya gained independence from British colonial rule in 1963, and since then, it has actively worked towards building its Soft Power. In the 1970s and 1980s, Kenya's tourism industry played a significant role in its Soft Power.

The country's beautiful landscapes, wildlife, and beaches attracted tourists from around the world. Additionally, Kenya's national parks and reserves, such as the Maasai Mara and Amboseli, were popular destinations for wildlife enthusiasts, further contributing to its Soft Power.

These attributes have helped Kenya to earn a rating of 95th as 'A great place to visit', but will continue to face substantial headwinds when Western nations advise that terrorists are very likely to try to carry out attacks in Kenya.

In the 1990s and 2000s, Kenya's Soft Power was enhanced by its cultural exports, particularly in music and film – but this year's research by Brand Finance, however, finds that these historical achievement are not currently at top of mind.

Kenya's diplomacy has also played a significant role in its Soft Power. The country has been actively involved in regional peacekeeping efforts, particularly in Somalia, where it contributes troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

Kenya has also played a role in brokering peace deals in the region, such as the Sudanese peace agreement in 2005 – but few of these actions gain global awareness, leading to a ranking of 113th for 'International Relations'.

Kenya's Soft Power has also been enhanced by its economic growth and stability. The country's robust economic growth, particularly in the 2000s, has made it an attractive destination for foreign investors.

Additionally, Kenya's government has implemented several economic policies aimed at creating a conducive business environment, such as the creation of special economic zones and the simplification of the business registration process.

As a result, one area where Kenya is amongst the world leaders is in 'Future Growth Potential,' where Kenya earned a ranking of 16th overall.

In conclusion, Kenya's Soft Power has been built over several decades, and it continues to evolve. The country's diversity, natural resources, vibrant cultural scene, and contributions to regional peace and stability have all contributed to its Soft Power. Kenya's Soft Power is a valuable asset that can be used to enhance its global influence and promote its interests – but there is certainly a lot of work to be done in coming years and decades.



Interview with AMDIE.



Ali Seddiki

Director General,
Moroccan Agency for
Investment and Export
Development



In a very competitive investment landscape as the global economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, what are the key assets that Morocco relies on to attract FDI?

Over the past 20 years under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Morocco has built a rare combination of assets that is of high value in the current context of value chains reorganization and decarbonization challenge: a competitive decarbonized production platform offering stability, close and open access to the largest consumer markets, with world class infrastructure, an abundance of quality human capital.

Firstly, Morocco offers a low-carbon solution that ranks among the most competitive in the world. The Kingdom has been a pioneer in initiating renewable energy projects. We've built one of the largest solar power plants in the world - Noor, and today, 37% of Morocco's installed energy capacity is generated from renewables with an objective of 52% by 2030.

Secondly, Morocco offers proximity and privileged access to a market of over 1.5 billion consumers. Morocco has taken full advantage of its location with the construction of Tanger Med Port - the 23rd largest worldwide, and the signing of free trade agreements covering more than 50 countries.

Then, Morocco has a well-trained young population that constitutes a deep talent pool. Having heavily invested in education to meet the needs of its young demography and of its economic development, Morocco produces every year over 150,000 graduates from its higher education courses and 200,000 from vocational learning studies.

Last but not least Morocco's institutions rooted in the Monarchical pact renewed by the reforms initiated by King Mohammed VI ensure stability and are committed to economic, democratic, and human development as illustrated by the recent New Development Model for a more inclusive and sustainable growth.

Morocco has seen a growing interest from international investors, particularly in the energy and manufacturing sectors. What are the flagship projects that AMDIE has been involved in recently?

Indeed, the recent investment announcements do illustrate the increasing traction of Morocco and highlights the growing sophistication of its industries.

Celebrating 10 years of its Tanger factory in the north of Morocco, French multinational automobile manufacturer Renault announced a few weeks ago it will produce its new electric car model Mobilize Duo in Morocco starting 2023.

Renault's choice reflects the success of the automotive industry in Morocco, its renowned competitiveness, and its recent development in engineering and clean energy manufacturing.

Flagship of another industry would be the creation of a new branch of Oracle Lab in Morocco announced by the group. The initiative will explore and transfer cutting-edge cloud, artificial-intelligence and machine-learning technologies to industry, science and public-sector clients.

Another example is Spirit Aerosystems who officially launched the assembly of the A220 fuselage in its Casablanca factory.



AMDIE launched the new Morocco Now campaign in October 2021. What are its main objectives for the coming years?

The Moroccan Agency for Investment and Export Development launched Morocco NOW in October 2021, just when we were nearing the end of the pandemic crisis.

The objective is to raise awareness about Morocco's competitive and carbon-free production platform that has been built methodically over the past 20 years under the leadership of King Mohammed VI and to attract private investments.

Morocco has one of the highest investment rates in the world relying on public investment for two-thirds, which has supported a tremendous infrastructure and industrial transformation.

Now is the time to reverse that ratio and to make private investment the primary vector of growth and driver of jobs creation in the coming years.



Interview with New Zealand Story.



David Downs
CEO,
New Zealand Story



New Zealand has reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic. What challenges are you facing after a period of limited ability to engage with your key audiences around the world? What are you doing to put the national brand in front of them and stimulate interest in New Zealand once again?

Yes, New Zealand has absolutely re-emerged from a period of concentrating on caring for our vulnerable internal population, to a period of reconnecting with the world. In fact, this happened nearly a year ago – which points to the challenge. While the global media are quick to spread a story of a country like New Zealand closing our borders, it has been much harder to get the message out there that we are again ‘open for business’. When New Zealand opened its borders in 2022, we re-welcomed visitors, trade partners, students, and others. It has been delightful to hear accents and phrases from foreign lands again, and we look forward to welcoming more. One unexpected challenge of reopening has been labour shortages in some key industries, meaning we have not always been able to extend the same welcome (‘manaaki’ in our language) that we would like to. New Zealand Story has been engaged to help with this challenge, and to firstly promote the fact that New Zealand is open, and also that we are a fantastic place to come and work, live, and play. We look forward to seeing even more connections!

New Zealand Story is among nation brand organisations actively using the data and insight coming from the Global Soft Power Index. How do you leverage the Index findings in particular and perceptions research more broadly in planning and executing your nation brand strategy?

We find the data from the Global Soft Power Index insightful and key to unlocking another layer of depth in our strategic brand positioning.

The sample size ensures a valid set of inputs and the key drivers give us good insight into the levers we need to look to in order to further enhance the brand. For New Zealand, we are lucky to enjoy a strongly positive perception from global audiences, and the insights from the GSPI give us clues as to which attributes we need to further highlight. For example, the GSPI shows us that the world does not perceive New Zealand as having a consistently strong business environment – and yet we are objectively one of the easiest places to do business, least corrupt, most transparent, with strong government and private institutions. That feedback show us it is not enough to be good, you have to demonstrate it, and promote your positives. We feed insights like that into our content and story work.

Jacinda Ardern was a great ambassador of the New Zealand nation brand. What does her resignation mean to the reputation and influence of New Zealand around the world?

Absolutely, our recent Prime Minister was a fantastic brand ambassador – empathetic and driven, compassionate yet strong. I was able to work closely with her, and I saw up close her ability to connect with diverse audiences, and she really personally bought into the concepts of country branding, and genuinely used the values and messages we crafted in her narrative. However, the brand of a country is not the brand of an individual, and we know that, while Prime Minister Ardern was an exemplar, the brand of the country transcends an individual person. Research and feedback shows that the values of the country, the consistency of behaviour and the work of thousands of ‘brand ambassadors’ will have the largest enduring impact over time. New Zealand is lucky in that the people of the country live the values every day, and the stories we can tell of past, present, and future, reinforce the key message – no matter who is in the hot seat, we are a country that cares about people and place.



Interview with PROMPERÚ.



Walter Vizarreta Vilcarromero
CEO,
PROMPERÚ



While some governments have only just established initiatives to support their nation brand, Peru can be proud of the numerous initiatives it has undertaken in recent years to promote the country.

We are very proud of our Peru Brand, which is about to celebrate its 12th anniversary. What have we achieved in this time? We have had a positive impact on the Peruvian economy through initiatives led by the public and private sectors. We developed the brand based on Peruvian motifs to reach the graphic identity of the Peru Brand, an icon that made us a reference in the region by positioning us as a safe country for tourism, the enjoyment of gastronomy, and the purchase of native products.

How can we say this today? Thanks to studies that measure the perception that others have of us, or those that analyse the opinion of the national public. The Peru Brand has managed to consolidate itself in the national market thanks to numerous initiatives, tactical actions, and campaigns. Thus, it currently has 100% awareness and generates pride for 80% of Peruvians, according to the monitoring we have done with Peruvian research companies. We have been improving over the last year in terms of international perceptions, including in the Global Soft Power Index, leveraged mainly on the variety of experiences we offer in culture, gastronomy, sports, and entertainment.

On the other hand, we know how the country image and the positioning of the Peru Brand and Peruvian products in different categories are taking shape. Towards the end of 2022, the Mesias Institute awarded us as "Trusted Brand" at the 9th Ibero-American Country Brand Forum held in Uruguay, and we won awards at the World Travel Awards

as Best Culinary Destination in South America, Best Cultural Destination in South America, and Best Tourist Attraction in South America. These achievements are in addition to the publication of National Geographic, which included our country in its list of the best destinations to visit in 2023, naming the archaeological site of Choquequirao as one of the five must-see adventure destinations for this year.

In this way, we make decisions based on consumer information and different aspects related to their preferences, habits, and new trends. We know our strengths and make them the axis of our communication, without forgetting that we must do so by adapting to each market: Latin America, Europe, the United States, and China, among others. This allows us to fine-tune our strategy to use the right channels and messages.

What have been the most complicated challenges in managing the Peru brand in the short and medium term?

Since the launching of the Peru Brand in 2011, PROMPERÚ – the Peruvian institution in charge of promoting tourism, exports, investments, and the country's image – and the country as a whole took on many challenges. As in other countries, we faced the pandemic and uncertain environments. However, Brand Peru identified new opportunities, taking on the challenge of adapting. First, we went back to looking inside Peru, recognising the country's differentiating attributes and how they contribute to society and the world, where we rediscovered who we are and all that we have to offer the world.

Likewise, we have adapted to digital acceleration and new technologies, which today allows us to segment our communication: by country, lifestyle, age range - especially the



new generations, both nationally and internationally.

Another challenge we see today is the reactivation of the tourism sector, which generates foreign exchange for the country in a decentralised manner, boosting various economic activities.

Thanks to tourism, travellers can also learn about cultural expressions through our dances, music, handicrafts, textile fibres, and foods that generate health and nutrition.

In the medium term, another challenge we have set ourselves is to help more companies export. The Peruvian export offer is diverse, and we have products such as superfoods, coffee, pisco, and alpaca that are highly accepted by different audiences and allow us to transmit the essence of the Peru Brand.

Finally, our great challenge is to make the Peru Brand better known. For this, the messages we deliver through trade, tourism, and the attraction of business investment are essential. These are truthful and attractive to our audiences. For this reason, constant monitoring of our publications is fundamental.

How do you define success for the Peru brand in the coming years?

The Peru Brand has achieved several milestones in each of the stages of its 12-year trajectory. In addition, building

and consolidating a nation brand in the minds of audiences is a permanent task, always being at the forefront and overcoming the challenges that arise every year.

Among the goals we have for the coming years, we seek to consolidate our position in Latin America in the different rankings published internationally, and then enter the top 20 globally to compare ourselves with country brands in other continents, such as those of Finland or Australia.

In order to achieve these goals, it is important to generate synergy with our different audiences: the Peruvians themselves in our country and abroad, public institutions, private companies at the national level, and also to expand cooperation at the international level.

Likewise, the promotion developed by PROMPERÚ with the Peru Brand makes it possible to inform the world about the variety of tourist destinations, exportable value-added products and services, the various locations for the film industry and business investment opportunities.

Therefore, we will be able to see the success of our country brand as long as it remains alive in the minds of Peruvians and is increasingly valued at the international level. Because the success of the Peru Brand is the success of all Peruvians.



Mihai Bogdan
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Romania

Romania's history of global Soft Power influence can be traced back to its strategic location between East and West, which has resulted in the country being influenced by both European and Eastern cultures.

Throughout its history, Romania has been a significant player in the region, participating in numerous conflicts and alliances, including World War I and World War II.

In the post-World War II era, Romania spent almost half a century under totalitarian communist rule and behind an Iron Curtain, which limited its influence to occasional worldclass sportsmen and an independent foreign policy that sought to maintain good relations with both the East and the West.

The demise of the communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe in 1989, and the subsequent joining of NATO and the EU, paved the way for Romania returning to an active role on the world stage.

In recent years, Romania's Soft Power influence has been fuelled by its growing economy and increasing role as a regional player in Central and Eastern Europe. The country has made significant strides in areas such as technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship, leading to a burgeoning startup ecosystem and an emerging reputation as a hub for tech talent.

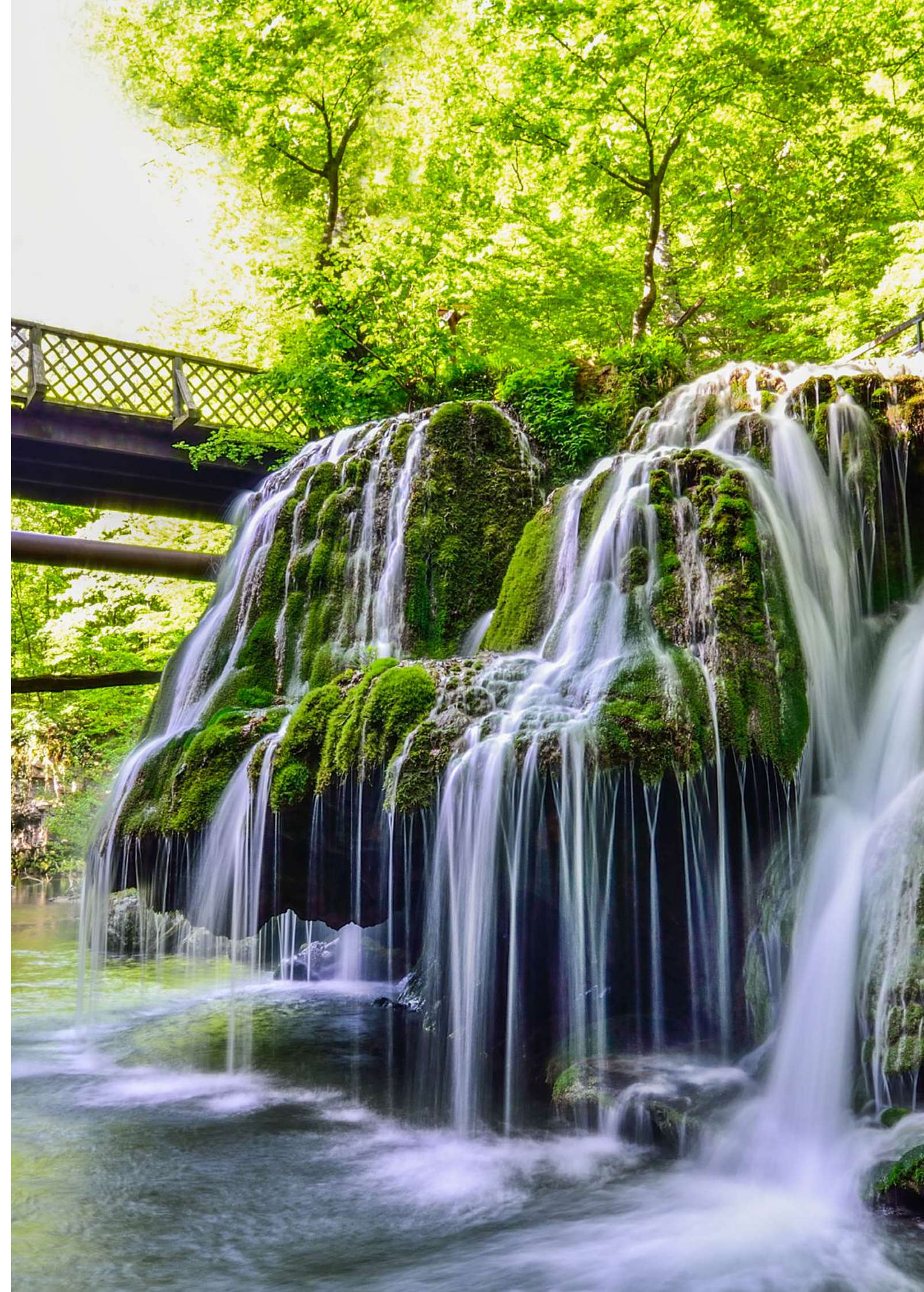
However, this year's ranking finds that Romania's Soft Power ranking has significantly declined in several key pillars such as "Products and brands the world loves", "Internationally admired leaders", "Influential in diplomatic circles", and "Leader in technology and innovation", according to the Global Soft Power Index (GSPI) 2023. This decline has led to a significant drop in Romania's overall influence, reputation, and impact on the world stage, which is a cause for concern for the nation's decision makers.

Soft Power must be the starting point for a forceful action plan. This plan must involve collaboration across sectors and communities to strengthen the Romanian nation brand. It is crucial to turn the trend of Soft Power decline around to improve the country's ability to promote its values, influence global decision-making, and attract investments, which would enhance Romania's economic growth and prosperity.

This decline is disconcerting, especially considering that recent developments have raised the profile of Central & Eastern Europe, which is emerging as a new geo-strategic power interest – and Romania should take advantage of this regional development.

Romania scores well in "Future growth potential", but one cannot take pride forever in being the eternal hopeful, if there is no proof of gradually monetising this potential. Without addressing the Soft Power pillars' relative decline in across the board, the country's ability to attract investments and to market its products and services will be affected negatively.

Soft Power can now be the starting point for a forceful action plan. This plan must involve collaboration across sectors and communities to strengthen the Romanian nation brand. It is crucial to turn the trend of Soft Power decline around to improve the country's ability to promote its values, influence global decision-making, and attract investments, which would enhance Romania's economic growth and prosperity.





Singapore



Rank **#21** ↓ #20

Score **51.0**/100 +2.6



Alex Haigh

Managing Director,
Brand Finance Asia

Singapore's Soft Power Index score rose from 48.5 to 51 but the nation brand fell a spot to 21st place this year, perhaps owing to Saudi Arabia's noteworthy improvement which saw it climb five places to be ranked 19th this year and given that all other nation brands within 2022's top 20 remained within 2023's top 20. In line with Singapore's reputation as a renowned business and financial hub, scores within the Business & Trade pillar were on an uptick, with its best showing in the "Easy to do business in and with" metric. However, its ranking fell in almost all metrics within this pillar except for the aforementioned metric. This suggests some degree of outpacing by other nation brands.

To illustrate what outpacing means, the United Arab Emirates jumped from 11th to 3rd place in the "Future Growth Potential" metric with a score improvement of 0.5 points to 5.9. In comparison, Thailand's 0.4-score improvement to 5.4 saw it falling seven places to 22nd for the same metric. Outpacing therefore implies that perceptions and attitudes of Singapore with respect to the Business & Trade pillar, although still optimistic, are close to approaching their maximum perceived potential while sentiments for fast-growing economies, such as those in the Middle East region, are reflected in their propensity for growth. This is in line with general outlooks on developed economies vis-à-vis developing economies or those that are rapidly internationalising.

Our findings therefore suggest that Singapore would do well not only to continue to improve business and trade infrastructure, but also build on messaging aimed at stoking excitement for its plan to transform into a future-proofed economy¹ and bolster its longstanding narrative of international business attractiveness.

Singapore's standing in the international community for good governance with an emphasis on integrity² continues to garner strong positive sentiments observed by an overall score increase of 1.1 to 5.2 for metrics within the Governance pillar. However, it dropped three places to 19th position for this pillar, once more suggesting outpacing as implied by the Business & Trade pillar. A strong brand positioning of governance first effected through the firm but effective policies of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founding prime minister, seems to have successfully sustained positive perceptions of the nation brand in this regard – supported by neutral to positive overall Governance pillar scores since 2020.

As the Governance pillar rankings suggest however, positive sentiments towards perceptions of Singapore may have simmered in juxtaposition with nation brands such as Iceland which climbed five places to be ranked 16th for the Governance pillar via a 1.6-score increase on the overall to 5.2. Indeed, despite having the same overall score of 5.2, Iceland posted a larger score increase than Singapore, once again reflecting enthusiasm towards the former's propensity in reaching its maximum perceived score.

To conclude, Singapore's performance in the 2023's Global Soft Power Index highlights the importance of taking into account not only score or rank variations of a nation brand but also the pacing of these variations in relation to other nation brands. From a branding perspective, we recommend that decision makers pace their messaging to regulate enthusiasm for their narratives as they continue to augment their nation brands' soft power.

¹Singapore's then-Minister for Trade and Industry, Gan Kim Yong, outlined the Singapore Economy 2030 plan "aimed at fostering a vibrant ecosystem of Singapore enterprises that are future-ready, globally competitive and possess deep innovative capabilities". Gan Kim Yong unveils Singapore Economy 2030 plan aimed at boosting exports to \$1 trillion (4 March 2022). *The Straits Times*.

²Clean, honest government has been vital to S'pore's progress: President Halimah (23 September 2022). *The Straits Times*.



Jeremy Sampson
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Africa

South Africa is currently facing many challenges that are holding it back from realizing its full potential. Its political leaders are more focused on personal gain and maintaining their grip on power rather than serving the country. The African National Congress (ANC), which is South Africa's ruling party and a "liberation party," has been plagued by corruption. With a general election scheduled for next year, the ANC is concerned about losing control.

Despite these issues, South Africa has much to offer. As the UK's The Economist magazine wrote earlier this year: 'South Africa has world class miners, manufacturers, and farmers. But its exporters cannot get their goods out of the country, they cannot make any money. South Africa is regularly referred to as Sub Saharan Africa's most industrialised country. That is still there for the moment.' However, none of the State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), which include electricity, roads, rail, ports, and the post office, are well-managed, and none of them are profitable.

South Africa has been suffering from power cuts for over 15 years, which are worse than ever and have had a debilitating effect on the country. This is due to bad planning, lack of maintenance, lack of investment, and corruption that continues to plague the country.

Businesses have invested heavily in generators and solar power, and even private homeowners have had to invest in batteries, inverters, and solar. This has led to a major supermarket chain spending over GBP 3 million a month on diesel fuel, while KFC is reducing its number of branches to manage the situation. Smaller brands are similarly struggling to survive as a result.

Despite its challenges, South Africa still ranks highest in Soft Power in Africa, with a score of 42.5 and 40th place globally, which is still way ahead of Mauritius (67), Rwanda (85), Nigeria (93), Botswana (96), and Kenya (100). South Africa's high score is largely due to its familiarity with other countries.

However, on most other metrics, it ranks either average or below average. For example, its scores on 'education and science' and 'governance' are particularly low. These issues impact the overall mood of the country, and many people are either emigrating or thinking about it. Some are moving to the Western Cape province, which is home to Cape Town and is governed more efficiently by a different political party than the rest of the country, which is still in the hands of the ANC.

Joining the BRICS liaison, which consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, had the potential to benefit South Africa. However, South Africa's mostly neutral stance on Russia is creating issues. Even Brazil has criticized Russia's aggressive actions, particularly the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Presently, war games are taking place in the Indian Ocean off the coast of South Africa, involving warships from Russia, China, and South Africa. As a result, the leading South African daily newspaper released an editorial on February 17th, stating: "Our shameful relationship with a rogue state - we are navigating stormy waters with nothing to gain. How much harm will South Africa suffer from its naval exercise?"

South Africa's Soft Power, which is the ability to influence and attract others through cultural, political, and economic means, has been affected by various factors, including its neutrality on Russia and its participation in war games with Russia and China. The country has also faced challenges in areas such as education, science, and governance, which have impacted its international ratings. Nevertheless, South Africa remains a popular destination for tourists due to its stunning scenery, wildlife, and wine.

To improve its Soft Power, South Africa needs to address its challenges, such as corruption and poor governance, and allow the private sector to play a more significant role in the country's development. With a wealth of talented people and natural resources, South Africa has the potential to move forward and achieve its full potential.



Interview with Brand South Africa.



Pumela Salela

Country Head,
United Kingdom,
Brand South Africa



Inspiring new ways

South Africa leads the ranking of Sub-Saharan nation brands in the Global Soft Power Index. It also has a significant tradition of moral leadership personalised by Nelson Mandela. What does leadership mean to South Africans and how can they help other African nation brands find their voice on the global stage?

Visionary and collaborative leadership is at the heart of our regional engagement strategy. Key initiatives such as the South Africa Investment Conference (SAIC) and the AfCFTA, South Africa is working towards challenging the notion that it is the exception to the continent, when in fact it is a committed partner to attaining the collective goal of regional growth and prosperity.

As the oldest nation branding agency on the continent, Brand South Africa has been tried and tested in the area of effective reputation management and nation brand marketing. As we and the rest of the continent navigate through the storms of COVID-19, we have had to look to the potential of the AfCFTA in that it holds the promise of an autonomous Africa, which is both self-sufficient and fit for purpose. The pandemic showed us that, when all is said and done, Africa must unite, not only in the rhetorical sense but in all senses: economic, political, security, health, food security, climate, and technology. Also, as the youngest continent we have an obligation to future generations to actively change the growth trajectory so we can create an environment that is conducive to solution-driven innovation and sustainable growth, that is focused on social mobility and increased inclusion.

As Brand South Africa we understand the power of narratives and perceptions, it is for that reason that we are extending our knowledge and expertise to our regional counterparts. The success of the AfCFTA is directly linked to how Africans see themselves and how they use positive

images and messaging to reach out to the rest of the region and by extension, the rest of the world. There is so much untapped potential in the region and in true African spirit – we remain true to attaining the hopes and dreams of our founding fathers of a united, peaceful, and prosperous Africa.

‘Future growth potential’ is where South Africa registers its highest score. Turning that potential into economic benefits requires focused policies. What are the key industries that South Africa is currently investing in to lay ground for future growth?

Some of the key milestones of South Africa’s Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan speak to Infrastructure and Innovation. With regards to Infrastructure, President Ramaphosa highlighted that a programme largely premised on Public-Private Partnerships would unlock investment in the sector with the goal of rebuilding world-class network infrastructure to boost aggregate demand. Additional incentive programmes include the Infrastructure Fund, where the Government of South Africa has pledged a commitment to use public funds to leverage private investment on a larger scale, by positioning “South Africa as a leading market for global business services, leveraging our unique strengths in customer service, broadband infrastructure, and expert skills”.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed South Africa and the region, that healthcare security is essential for a nation - and more so a region - to successfully navigate a health crisis. As a country, health crisis is a phenomenon that we are very familiar with, having dealt with some of the highest numbers of HIV/AIDS cases in the world. We had to not only gain the knowledge, but also work towards creating domestic solutions that ensure that we contain the virus and educate our citizens.



The HIV/AIDS crisis was slightly different than COVID-19 in that the fake news/misinformation phenomenon did not influence the public at the kind of level that it currently does. Various media platforms and social media drove a narrative that dangerously influenced global policy. For an emerging economy like ours, the goal was to use the lessons and structures we built in response to the HIV/AIDS crisis to successfully navigate through another health crisis.

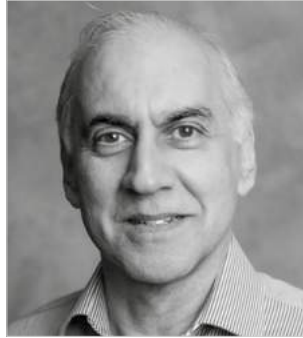
On the positive end of things, South Africa saw its innovation capabilities as a necessity to the region and the rest of the world. As such we, through initiatives like TRIPS, were able to look to our existing pharmaceutical manufacturing capabilities to step in and display the true potential that the region has. The collective good faith that was displayed by the international community was instrumental in ensuring that South Africa became one of the first countries in Africa to manufacture and distribute a COVID-19 vaccine.

The various endorsements from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the African Union (AU), provided the necessary buy-in for the rest of the region and world, to chart a new course for African self-sufficiency. It also showed the world our innovation capabilities through the well-established Aspen Pharmacare and Afrigen Biologics, and the newly established Biovac Institute, which is a public-private initiative. These

projects will greatly aid South Africa in our quest to become a hub of scientific innovation, research and development, especially in vaccine manufacturing for COVID-19, cancer, tuberculosis, and other potential pandemics.

Brand South Africa has been following the Brand Finance rankings for many years. How does understanding nation brand perceptions help inform your marketing strategy?

As the custodian of the South African nation brand, our primary mandate is to ensure that we understand how the country and by extension the nation brand is perceived. Perception by its very nature is driven by a set of ideas and narratives that are directly and indirectly created by particular events, dynamics, and characteristics. As such, it is our goal to firstly understand the drivers of those perceptions and work towards curating a narrative that seeks to shift the focus of particular perceptions. The work done through the Global Soft Power Index provides us with key insights into perceptions about South Africa – where to leverage and build on our strengths and where to implement interventions that will deal with our weaknesses, in a relevant and accurate manner. Simply put, research insights provide us with the analysis and interpretation of human behaviour and trends, so we may improve the effectiveness of our targeted marketing efforts.



Ruchi Gunewardene
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is currently facing its worst economic crisis, brought about by economic mismanagement over many years and unsustainable foreign debt.

This crisis is causing significant economic hardships for people in the country, including soaring inflation and rising commodity prices that are reducing their purchasing power. To make matters worse, the global news coverage of Sri Lanka's rapid economic decline is hurting the country's reputation, which is negatively impacting tourism and investment.

Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing is taking action

SLIM, the national body of marketing in Sri Lanka, has taken an admirable initiative to repair the country's damaged brand image. To do this, SLIM is adopting a fact-based approach to understand how the world views Sri Lanka and is working with relevant stakeholders to develop a structured plan to address the main issues.

The primary goal of SLIM, as articulated by its current President Nuwan Gamage, is to make Sri Lanka an attractive destination for travel, investment, and living.

This will be achieved by improving the country's reputation among external stakeholders. SLIM aims to regain confidence in the country by attracting tourists, showcasing investment opportunities, and building infrastructure that will lead to an improved quality of life for citizens.

The challenge

Sri Lanka's position on the Brand Finance Soft Power Index has dropped sharply, falling 42 places from 73 to 115, making it the country with the steepest decline in this year's index.

The Soft Power pillars also show a decline across all categories, and Sri Lanka now ranks among the bottom 10 countries on the index. The lowest perceptions are observed in Governance, where Sri Lanka ranks 118th out of 121 countries measured.

To rebuild Sri Lanka's reputation, SLIM is partnering with Brand Finance to prepare a comprehensive Perceptions Report on Sri Lanka, which will be included in the Global Soft Power Index 2023 study.

This report will be used to gather insights and educate various stakeholders, such as SLIM's executive committee, influential members, private sector institutions, government policy makers, and political parties. The objective is to get their buy-in to a path of rebuilding Sri Lanka's nation brand.

To achieve this goal, SLIM plans to use the facts to collaboratively build a practical implementation plan. The aim is to align key stakeholders who can influence policy and explore communication and promotional opportunities. The goal is to rebuild Sri Lanka's nation brand by regaining confidence of its stakeholders.



Interview with Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing.



Nuwan Gamage

President,
Sri Lanka Institute
of Marketing



Sri Lanka's economic crisis has created unprecedented challenges for the country, impacting global perceptions towards the nation. What are your goals for the next decade in terms of building up Sri Lanka as a nation brand?

As the national body for marketing, it is the sincere belief of the Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing that nation branding is a powerful answer to the current economic crisis. It is true that our reputation as a nation has suffered during that past few decades, but we also vehemently believe that we have the resources to rectify that with a powerful nation branding strategy which goes beyond a marketing campaign. We have seen numerous, extremely diverse tourism campaigns that Sri Lanka has launched. Our approach to nation branding is different to that fundamentally, in it being policy-led versus merely a communications approach. In the next few decades, we hope to leverage our nation's resources to co-craft and assist whoever is in power to roll out a policy-led strategy that is anchored in sustainability and solving issues that are not just relevant to Sri Lanka but also to the rest of the world, which should ideally enable the world to see Sri Lanka through a new paradigm.

Culture & Heritage is Sri Lanka's strongest Soft Power pillar, particularly attributes such as "great place to visit" and "food the world loves". What role does this play in your national identity, and how do you plan to communicate these strengths to the global audience?

Indeed, it is a pleasure that most countries recognise the goodness of our people, the wealth of our culture, and appreciate the culinary wonders we have to offer. Whilst these will definitely play a key role in further positioning our motherland as one of the world's favourite travel destinations,

our nation branding approach will look a bit further than doing only that. If we take learnings from countries such as Bhutan who have leveraged "Happiness" as a means of really driving their Soft Power alongside much larger countries than themselves, that is the kind of approach we are looking at.

If I were to explain it from a marketing context, merely promoting the "product" that is "Sri Lanka" is not going to yield long term benefits, but if we were to find a unique selling proposition such as "Happiness" in the Bhutan context and really drive a long-term, sustainability-led brand building effort, that is when we will see real impact.

Looking to the future, what are some other key industries that Sri Lanka should be focusing on to lay the ground for future economic growth?

The ideal nation branding strategy should drive growth in any and all industries if done right. It is similar to how a company's employer brand grows or how retention grows when you invest in strengthening brand equity.

Having said that, exports will definitely play a key role in any nation branding strategy, closely followed by tourism. But the idea is to go further than that – to shift the nation's image around the world in order to drive investments towards us, thereby strengthening each and every industry.

Most importantly, the right nation branding strategy should reinstate love for the country amongst locals, enabling us to retain crucial talent in the country and recreating the need to live in our own motherland, which was a huge red flag we see in this year's research where Sri Lankans think less of our country in comparison to what the world thinks about us, in some respects.





Anna Brolin
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Nordics

Sweden is a nation that has made significant strides in both hard and Soft Power over the years.

With a long-standing reputation for neutrality, the country has often found itself in a unique position in global politics. In recent times, the nation has been making headlines due to its political and economic changes, including its application to join NATO and the shift in government in 2022.

After much debate across society and with large parliamentary majorities supporting the decision, both Finland and Sweden handed their official letters of application to join NATO in May.

The process for both nations joining NATO is currently underway, with all member countries required to ratify the amended NATO treaty before Finland and Sweden can officially become NATO members. This decision reflects a shift in Sweden's political stance, moving away from neutrality and towards a more proactive approach to international security.

The 2022 general elections in Sweden resulted in a change of government. The new government has announced that combating rising crime will be among its top priorities, as crime and violence rose to new record highs in the previous year.

This shift in focus reflects Sweden's commitment to ensuring the safety and security of its citizens, an essential component of Soft Power.

Additionally, Sweden holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2023. This position will allow the country to showcase its diplomatic and leadership skills on a global stage, possibly further boosting its Soft Power.

Despite market turmoil caused by increased mortgage rates, record-high energy prices, and inflation, many of Sweden's strongest brands have proven resilient to the economic downturn.

IKEA, H&M, Volvo, and Spotify have kept their positions as Sweden's most valuable brands, contributing to the nation's economic success. This resilience and success are reflected in Sweden's Top 50 company brands having collectively grown by an impressive 12% over the previous year.

Sweden's Soft Power has been recognized globally, with the country's Global Soft Power score increasing by 2.8 points in 2023, resulting in the nation climbing up the ranking by 3 spots to the 11th rank. Sweden retains its position as the most highly ranked Nordic Soft Power, followed by Norway (rank 17).

Whereas safety and security aspects is now a major topic of debate in Sweden, outside perceptions towards being politically stable and well-governed, having high ethical standards/low corruption, and being safe and secure remain particularly strong.

This reflects Sweden's long-lasting commitment to democracy, transparency, and accountability.

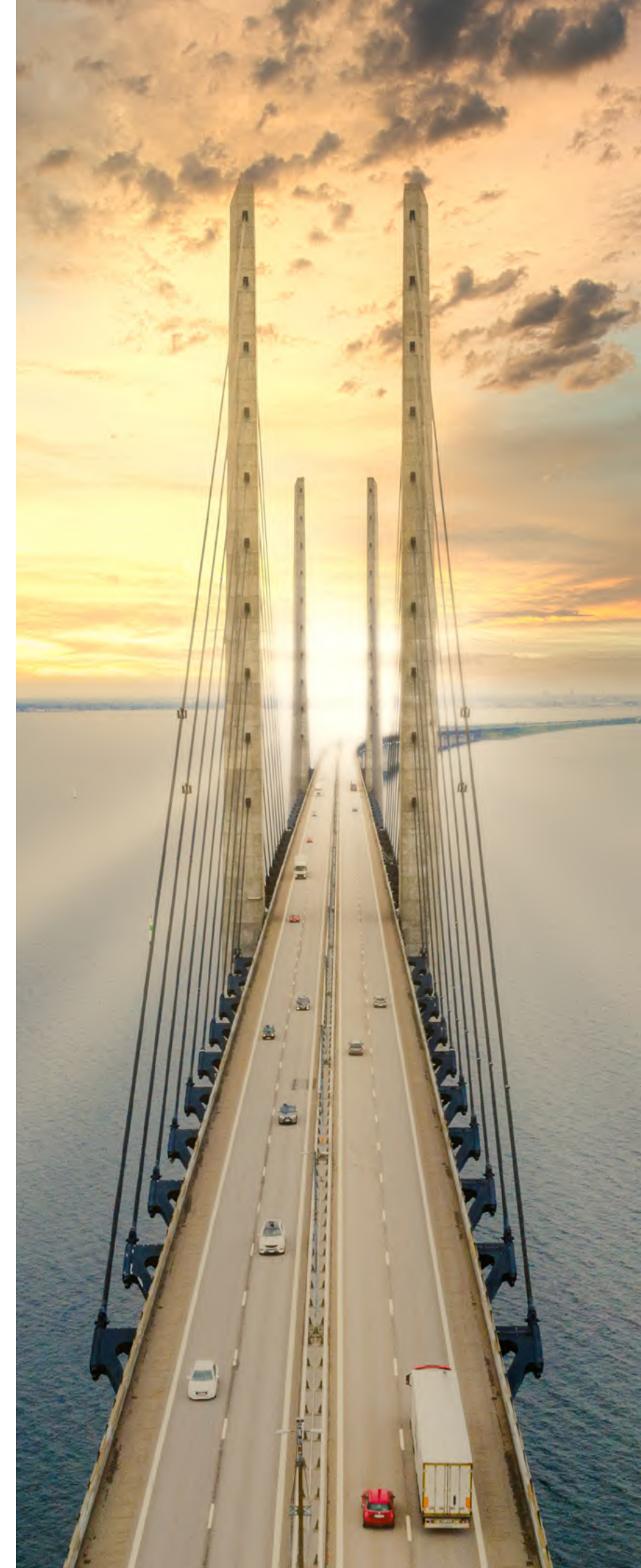
Sweden ranks 3rd globally in the "Sustainable Future" pillar, a new addition into the Global Soft Power Index, falling behind only Germany and Japan. The nation ranks among the top 5 across all four individual metrics making up the "Sustainable Future" pillar.

This reflects the nation's efforts towards environmental sustainability, which is increasingly turning into an important aspect of Soft Power.

Finally, global perceptions towards Sweden having a strong and stable economy have resulted in score improvements also in the business and trade pillar. This reflects that Sweden remains an attractive destination for businesses and investors alike.

In conclusion, as a relatively small nation Sweden continues to push way above its weight as a Soft Power nation. In the eyes of the world Sweden certainly remains a success story and particularly so in relation to environmental sustainability, governance and economic performance.

So again, the nation has climbed up the ranks in the Global Soft Power Index. It will be interesting to see if today's highly uncharacteristic domestic challenges will make a dent during 2023 or perhaps be outweighed by possible perception benefits relating to Sweden's presidency of the Council of the European Union as well as Sweden's efforts to become a NATO member.



Interview with Swedish Institute.



Cecilia Andrae
Senior Adviser,
Swedish Institute



This year we have introduced a new pillar, Sustainable Future, to enhance our measurement of environmental sustainability. Sweden grabs 3rd place worldwide. What do you believe are the key actions behind Sweden's success in this field and what does it mean for Sweden's brand story?

Sustainability has long been a key feature in the Sweden brand story – and of the Swedish society. Climate change is perceived to be one of the main global challenges among the general public in Sweden, and Sweden has for a long time been engaged in finding innovative solutions. Together with ambitious climate policies, we think this has led to high credibility and a strong reputation in the sustainability area.

Today different parts of the Swedish society: politicians, companies, and people, continue to contribute to a sustainable future. It is acknowledged that sustainable change can only be realised with the participation of different stakeholders, and together with other countries. We also know that action speaks louder than words. This way Sweden can maintain its strong and positive image.

When we asked people around the globe if Sweden enjoys a strong and positive reputation the answer was a resounding yes. Sweden now ranks as the world's 6th most reputable nation, which is also an improvement compared to last year. What, in your opinion, explains Sweden's excellent reputation and what storytelling efforts have contributed to the success?

Even though Sweden is a small country, we have a strong nation brand, or brand identity, that has been built over a long period of time. Reputation cannot be built in one day. Today Sweden's identity – or reputation - mainly consists of positive attributes, such as good governance, sustainability, and stability. Sweden is also perceived to be a country that contributes positively to common global challenges. The nation brand of Sweden

builds both on how the Swedish society is perceived, and on how Sweden's actions are perceived. To have a positive reputation, you need to be considered a country contributing to the common good. We also know that Sweden's reputation builds on attributes such as equality and high quality of life. In a world where many want a more balanced life these aspects are attractive to, for example, international talent. To remain attractive, and attract new target groups, it will be important to increase the knowledge about Sweden.

All Nordic countries tend to perform very well within the People & Values pillar, with Sweden in the lead. Why do you think Sweden performs particularly well when measuring "soft" values, such as generosity, trustworthiness, and tolerance and inclusiveness?

Universal values such as equality and democracy have long been part of Sweden's identity, nationally and internationally. And we know that these values are very attractive to many target groups in different parts of the world.

This is also true for "soft" values such as tolerance and inclusiveness, that are also key parts of Sweden's society and identity. Promoting these aspects abroad is central in Sweden's official communications, something that seems more important than ever, considering the democratic backsliding in the world.

At the same time, we know that it is crucial to listen, and have a dialogue-based communication. This is Sweden's approach along with being open and building on interest and curiosity for Sweden. Being an innovative society that wants to try new ways and solutions, we see that there is a lot to be curious about in Sweden. This is a good starting point for communication.





United States



Rank **#1** ← #1
Score **74.8**/100 **+4.1**



Laurence Newell
Managing Director,
Brand Finance Americas

According to Brand Finance's latest research, the United States' Global Soft Power rating reached an all-time high, extending its positive trend for the second consecutive year.

The USA added four points to its total score, placing it in first place and seven points ahead of the second-ranked United Kingdom. Equally impressive is the 19-point gain compared to the 55.9 score it recorded in 2021.

Though the US overall scores continue to grow where one expects the US to do well, attributes such as A Strong and Stable Economy (scores 10 of 10), Influence in Diplomatic Circles (scores 10 of 10), Leader in Technology and Innovation (scores 9.0 of 10 – likely led by best in class innovation such as Apple, Microsoft, Tesla, and Amazon), Brand USA scores poorly in one area in particular that should speak to all of us who either live in the United States or who represent the country abroad: America's scores lowest in the People and Values pillar.

Further investigation reveals that the US is trending downwards in attributes such as Trustworthy (down 11 places to 32nd), has lost five ranking places in perceptions related to Generous, and most worrying, is that America ranks 103rd in Friendly People (down 41 spots from being ranked 62nd in 2022). The world sample according to our study perceives that there are 102 nations with friendlier people.

It is surprising that a country that is perceived to be Best in Class in a study that measures the preference of others through appeal and attraction would score so poorly on perceptions of the friendliness of its people.

However, this issue can be fixed, but it will require a significant shift in how Americans treat each other within the country's borders before the country can repair its reputation abroad.

In that sense, the opportunity for further improvement in the United States' Soft Power is likely not something that can be changed or fixed by Government policy. It reflects a weakness in how non-Governmental actors are perceived and might indicate a deep-seated cultural challenge to improving American Soft Power in the future.

Given the results found in this study, there is more right with Brand America than wrong. However, as a great American writer, Thomas Friedman has stated, it will depend on reviving America's ability to do big, hard things together once again.



Interview with GREAT Campaign.



Andrew Pike
Director,
GREAT Campaign

How has the UK government leveraged Brand Britain to promote the country's soft power and attract tourism, talent, trade, and investment, and what specific strategies has it employed to achieve these goals?

Established just before the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics, GREAT represents one of the UK's most successful deployments of soft power. It is designed to maximise immediate and longer-term benefits for all parts of the UK by building positive global profile, reputation and soft power influence.

The campaign has gone from strength to strength, and in the last year alone GREAT attracted over £60 million of foreign direct investment, helped to generate over £400 million from international students, and has a further £600 million of export, investment, and tourism returns currently being assessed.

I would say that GREAT's ability to work cross-government and provide a clear, single voice from the UK to the world, has been key to its success. But in terms of soft power, our ability to work with the country's leading brands and individuals, from the BBC and the Premier League, to Gordon Ramsay and Katherine Jenkins, gives us a special advantage.

With the rise of digital diplomacy and social media, how is GREAT utilising these platforms to project soft power and showcase Brand Britain to a global audience, and what challenges and opportunities does this present?

We still see a place for in-person events. They help to engage key stakeholders and drive reputation, but digital platforms are a crucial tool in reaching diverse and dispersed audiences globally across different languages. Our research shows they play a key role in the inspiration phase of the customer journey.

GREAT is very much a 'digital first' campaign and we are always looking for innovative ways to utilise the latest technologies. For example, our partner VisitBritain is just about to launch an exciting new campaign that will invite consumers to take part in an accent challenge game using machine learning. People from a variety of regions across the UK, will invite users to try their hand at local accents, while educating them about that region and its tourism offer. The campaign is a world first for using voice technology in this way and I cannot wait to see the results.

The UK performs particularly well within the Education & Science pillar, specifically linked to "strong educational system". What role does science and education play in the future growth of the UK and how do you communicate this abroad?

It is fantastic that our world-leading education and science credentials have been recognised in this report. The UK is home to some of the greatest universities on the planet and more global leaders have been tutored in the UK than anywhere else on earth. We know the quality of our education system is a key attraction for prospective students, and GREAT's StudyUK programme, in partnership with the British Council, continues to promote the country as a first-class study destination all over the world.

The Prime Minister has a clear mission. That we are the most innovative economy in the world and that we cement this country as a science and technology superpower. This will be the driving force behind the government's commitment to boosting the economy through stronger growth, better jobs and careers - and new discoveries that advance the health and prosperity of society whilst ensuring we are secure as a nation



05 Contributions

What do the experts say?

- **Andrew Neil**, *Publisher, Editor, Broadcaster and Columnist*
- **Chrystal Dare**, *Special Counsel, Corrs Chambers Westgarth*
- **Professor David Ellwood**, *Senior Adjunct Professor, Johns Hopkins University, SAIS Europe*
- **Deborah Bonetti**, *Director of the Foreign Press Association in London and the UK Correspondent at Il Giornio*
- **Lord Ed Vaizey**, *Member of the House of Lords*
- **Fredrik Reinfeldt**, *Former Prime Minister of Sweden*
- **Dr Giannina Warren**, *Senior Lecturer, MA Place Branding, Middlesex University London*
- **Jack Sim**, *Founder of the World Toilet Organisation*
- **Dr Keith Dinnie**, *Reader in Marketing and Associate Dean for Business and Community Engagement, University of Dundee School of Business*
- **Peggy Liu**, *Chairperson, Joint US-China Collaboration on Clean Energy (JUCCCE)*

The Soft Power of the British Media.



Andrew Neil

Publisher, Editor,
Broadcaster and
Columnist

Britain remains a Soft Power superpower, second only to the United States and, though the British do not generally realise that (such is our propensity always to do ourselves down), it should surprise nobody. British culture – as exemplified by film, television, music (of all types), history, parliamentary democracy, literature, and sport – continues to have global appeal and influence.

As the country agonises about whether it remains a military power of the first rank (my own view is that its hard power is more formidable than the naysayers would have you believe), it should be in no doubt about its Soft Power. Nowhere is that more true than in the audio-visual (A/V) world of entertainment and news, where a strong domestic base has combined with huge and growing international investment to create an A/V sector second only to America.

From Shakespeare to Peaky Blinders, BBC World to Downton Abbey, Chernobyl (made by Sky and designated the greatest-ever TV drama by Los Angeles critics) to Harry Potter, British-made film and TV has a global footprint only the Americans can match.

Of course, the English language, the closest we have to a global lingua franca, is an enormous asset (amplified by the fact that we share it with America, the unchallenged leading Soft Power). But the depth of British skills, A/V technology, studio infrastructure and, above all, incredible creativity have played their vital parts too.

There are jobs and prosperity in Soft Power. The US TV streaming giants have poured investment into the UK, making Britain their biggest production hub outside North America. In recent years more Hollywood blockbusters have been made in dear old Blighty than Hollywood.

Sometime in the next year, there will be more studio space in Greater London than Greater Los Angeles.

It is not just the capital that benefits. At a recent lunch in Belfast, the mayor told me that Game of Thrones (made in a Belfast studio) and Titanic (built in a Belfast shipyard, given renewed status in popular culture by the 1997 Hollywood blockbuster) were worth several hundred million pounds a year to the Northern Ireland economy in tourism. As we spoke, a violin quartet serenaded us with the theme to Game of Thrones.

More and more films and TV series seem to require a London location for at least part of the shoot. The great wheel on the South Bank has almost replaced Big Ben as the iconic opening shot. The current Netflix comedy-crime drama ratings success “You” has an episode in series one set at a Charles Dickens fair in New England where Americans dress up in Victorian garb and try to speak with British accents. Series four is entirely based in London. That is Soft Power for you.

Reliable news and current affairs are also a huge Soft Power asset for Britain. The BBC, Sky News, and ITN are all world-class news gatherers and providers with global reputations. The American networks can outgun them in resources but not in global reputation: the US giants, rightly or wrongly, are thought to have skin in the game (representing American interests). British news is seen as more trustworthy and impartial.

It all adds, in an age of fake news, to Britain’s reputation for news you can trust and rely on. Nowhere is that more so than the BBC World Service. Most countries crave to have an international broadcaster of such well-established credentials. Given the pittance it costs, it beggars belief that the government would rather cut its budget further than invest more in it.

Soft Power enhances Britain’s reputation for fairness, democracy, culture, civilised values (which we do not always live up to). It is one reason why countries that were not even former colonies want to



join the Commonwealth. It is why more and more people want to come and live, work, and be educated here (among the top 30 universities in the world, only America has more). It helps explain why everything associated with Soft Power now accounts for around a trillion pounds in our economy.

London is a global city-state, its only rival New York (and as somebody who loves and has lived in both cities my view is London now edges it). It is a global magnet for talent and for those who want a better life (a far cry from the rather dull, depressing, very British city when I came down from university in the early 1970s).

We Brits really have no idea how much the rest of world is interested in us. Naturally, America attracts the greatest global interest as the dominant world culture. But we come second, as does our media in terms of global influence.

Of course, Soft Power is always vulnerable if you do not have the hard power to protect it. But Soft Power can be a valuable ally of hard power. Just look at Ukraine.

The bravery and sacrifice of its military and people have thwarted the Russian invaders, so far. But it has also used social media to rally the democratic

world to its cause. President Zelenskyy has exploited that to such an extent that the leaders of the world’s major democracies now vie to be photographed alongside him and be seen to be doing whatever they can to help. Soft Power in aid of hard power.

Britain’s position as a Soft Power superpower looks pretty entrenched to me. It reflects our political values, culture, and even foreign policy. The rest of the world largely seems to like what it sees and wants more. But our position cannot be taken for granted. It cannot be said that Brexit has yet enhanced our Soft Power status; whether it does, remains to be seen. Germany is a formidable Soft Power competitor, even though it has few of our natural advantages in the Soft Power stakes.

A reduction in our hard power was always inevitable in a post-Empire world. If British Soft Power also declines, it will only be because we neglect it.

Copyright in the Australian Aboriginal Flag Assigned to the Commonwealth of Australia.



Chrystal Dare
Special Counsel,
Corrs Chambers
Westgarth



At the beginning of 2022, Mr Harold Thomas, artist and the creator of the Australian Aboriginal Flag, entered into a landmark deal to assign copyright in the Aboriginal Flag to the Commonwealth of Australia. Corrs acted pro bono for Mr Thomas, and led the negotiations with Colin Golvan AM KC, while Clayton Utz acted for the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

When Corrs commenced acting for Mr Thomas in the beginning of 2020, it was clear that there needed to be a resolution to the complex issues that sat behind the Free the Flag movement in Australia, in the unusual situation where the copyright in a national flag remained privately held.

After almost two years of negotiations, the transaction was ultimately concluded in the year following the 50th anniversary of the Flag's creation.

The deal was announced by then Prime Minister Scott Morrison on 25 January 2022, and the A\$20.05 million total transaction amount included a payment to Mr Thomas of A\$13.5 million as consideration for the copyright assignment, and buy-out of contentious licences to WAM Clothing and Wooster Holdings.

Mr Thomas retained his moral rights in the Flag after the assignment, including the right of integrity.

Context

In 1995, the Aboriginal Flag was declared an official Flag of Australia under the Flags Act 1953 (Cth). In 1997, in the case of *Thomas, Harold Joseph v Brown, David George* [1997] FCA 215; 37 IPR 207, represented by Colin Golvan AM KC, Harold Thomas's authorship and ownership of the Flag was contested. Ultimately, Sheppard J of the Federal Court of Australia declared Harold Joseph Thomas the author of the artistic work, being the design for the Flag. The case provides an illuminating

history of the period and the Flag's inception, and removed any questions around authorship and ownership entering into the negotiations.

The deal with the Commonwealth

The negotiations involved five contracting parties and their legal representatives, a three-week Senate enquiry in the second half of 2020, and some unique tax dimensions given the age of this intangible asset. Nine partners and 15 lawyers across Corrs' IP, Tax, Projects, and Corporate teams were involved.

Aside from the A\$13.5 million consideration for Assignment, the public interest dimensions of the deal were critical, and, as such, were enshrined in the deal document – a public document to reside in the National Archives of Australia at the instigation of former Indigenous Affairs minister, Kenneth Wyatt AM.

Those key planks included:

- + Assignment of the copyright in the Flag to the Commonwealth so that the Flag may be permitted by the Commonwealth to be open for public use, including for reproduction or communication to the public by any person in any way without licence fee (subject to any continuing exclusive licences);
- + Establishment of an Australian Aboriginal Flag Legacy not-for-profit by Mr Thomas with A\$2 million of the consideration payment amount;
- + Financial support of the ongoing work of NAIDOC;
- + A\$100,000 per year allocated in furtherance of the development of Indigenous governance and leadership; and
- + Establishment and maintenance of an online repository of information and educational material relating to the Australian Aboriginal Flag.



Colin Golvan AM KC has commented:

"It is unquestionably the most important copyright work we have. The fact that we have a truly unifying flag which is free to the Aboriginal people in particular for usage as their representative flag is an important step in our reconciliation journey."

Reflective of this significance is the level of public interest around this matter and press attention in Australia. The matter brought up questions around artistic works, copyright ownership and licensing, the role of flags in society, and the nature and value of intellectual property assets.

Corrs worked alongside David Haigh and his team at Brand Finance in relation to this unique matter, both teams acting on a pro bono basis.

Corrs is now establishing the Australian Aboriginal Flag Legacy not-for-profit on Mr Thomas's behalf with A\$2 million of the transaction proceeds, and it is anticipated that Corrs will have ongoing involvement with that charity, which will focus on Indigenous men's and women's health.

Mr Thomas plans to launch an exhibition of fifty original artworks (predominantly oil paintings) which he created in the fiftieth year of the Australian Aboriginal Flag, in the coming months.

As for the Flag now, Mr Thomas says:

"The Aboriginal flag is in a safe place where the Commonwealth will protect and be the custodian of it, and I like that... because it's freed up to be accessed for all Australian people...and allows the Aboriginal flag to breathe a new life in itself...in partnership with the Australian flag."

The 'Formula of Life': A Key to Nation Branding?



David William Ellwood
Senior Adjunct Professor,
Johns Hopkins University,
SAIS Europe

At the dawn of the 'American Century', in the early 1940s, an Irish nationalist writer declared: 'Our problem is to find a formula of life as between the old traditions and the new world rushing into us from every side.' In these lines I aim to demonstrate how Italy has found – or worked out – such a formula for itself, and how it can be considered key to their success in nation or place branding.

As a long-time resident of Italy, it seems to me that whatever its structural problems, this is a country where one can see established syntheses of tradition and modernity successfully at work on every side. At the start of February, the Italian equivalent of the Financial Times, *Il Sole/24 Ore*, pointed to the key sectors and products which are leading Italian brands to conquer the highest of high-end markets around the world. They include Ferraris and Lamborghinis, luxury yachts and furniture, tourism of the most exclusive variety, rare wines, precious jewellery: all segments showing remarkable growth in recent years, to levels well above the pre-pandemic era.

The senior partner at Bain & Co, specialising in luxury markets, claimed that the added value of 'il made in Italy' (sic) is to be found in 'its uniqueness, its flexibility and the very special *savoir faire* which national producers bring to their work.' I would suggest that at the heart of this 'savoir faire' is the very self-conscious marrying of certain ideas of tradition with what markets are thought most likely to appreciate in terms of novelty.

It is food which is the most prominent sector trading on this approach. The website of the Barilla pasta company, present in over 100 countries, insists again and again on the fusion of tradition and innovation. Their website says: 'food is a pleasure which touches all our senses and gives us access to a world made of joy, tradition, and innovation.'

We set out from Italy's peasant traditions, inspired by their history to offer people an experience of authenticity rooted in the past, but which looks to the future, always respecting sustainability...'

A quite different conception of the relationship between tradition and innovation is represented by the Slow Food movement. Born originally in protest at the arrival of McDonald's at the heart of historic Rome, Slow Food now presents itself as a worldwide reality with 100,000 sympathisers and branches in 150 countries.

The movement was officially founded in Paris in 1989 when a small group of environmental activists published its own 'Manifesto'. This denounced the evils of an ever faster, ever more intense industrialisation of food, and the virtues of a much slower lifestyle, renouncing fast-food and all that it implied.

In the early 2000s, the movement's first commercial spin-off came to life. This was Eataly, a chain of high-quality food shops and restaurants, now worldwide. As the company's website explains, the point was to identify brands and producers which shared the values of the overall project: attention to quality, environmental and economic sustainability, cultural diversity.

Today Slow Food enthusiasts can join programmes which favour slow travel, slow fishing, slow cheese, slow bees, slow meat and much else besides. Its networks include markets, chefs, gardens and indigenous communities around the world.

But its most typical performances are to be found in Italy itself: the great world cheese festival in alternate Septembers; the *Saloni del Gusto* in Turin, which last year attracted 350,000 visitors and 3000 delegates from 130 countries; its *convivia* (Slow Food chapters) up and down the country.

The contemporary era in the status of Italy's very particular national brand, with food at its centre, began with the Expo World Fair of Milan in 2015. Dedicated to the theme of 'Feeding the planet, energy for life!', over 6 months, more than 20 million visitors explored 150 national and company pavilions. The general success of the Expo produced a number of spin-offs. The Foreign Ministry in Rome took up the challenge of 'gastrodiplomacy', setting in motion an annual tradition entitled the 'World Wide Week of Italian Cuisine'.

Following Milan, in 2016 a conference at Nomisma, an economic think-tank based in Bologna, showed how a qualitative leap forward had taken place in the attention that authorities at every level were giving to food and wine as a key currency of business, but also the sort of export which advertised the nation's creativity, territories and values.

They saw how a narrative of identity was emerging from the nation's food experience in all its forms, one which expressed a distinctive and successful synthesis of tradition and modernity.

Soft Power can be defined simply as a cultivated relationship between hard power and intangible influence, the two joined by the force of national, institutional, or corporate examples, or some combination of these models.

The lesson of successful nation-states – such as Italy – is that their Soft Power derives from their ability to synthesise over time a distinctive 'formula of life', one which visibly embodies the best of the past and the newest of the new, the sort of appeal which people everywhere will want to emulate.



Soft Power – Leveraging the News Media.



Deborah Bonetti

Director of the Foreign Press Association in London and the UK Correspondent at Il Giornale

Soft Power increases the trust and attractiveness that people around the world feel for a particular country, forging positive connections and a sense of admiration and respect that no hard power or indeed money can buy.

For many years, Britain has had a strong Soft Power advantage, ranking right up there with most leading liberal, capitalist democracies, such as Germany, the US, and Japan. Thanks in part to the dominance of the English language, it has been able to reach around the world at a truly granular level, impacting a vast number of individuals in a way that no foreign policy could ever do. The Commonwealth has also maintained British influence around the world in its former colonies, with 56 countries keeping alive the links of the past to British sovereignty.

However, Brexit has changed all that. Following the 2016 referendum, Britain has often been characterised as a less friendly, more hostile country, and it needs to do something to change that before the benign legacy of the past completely evaporates.

International competition is also increasing and, while the UK is still polling well – in the Global Soft Power Index and other rankings – it faces considerable challenges by a host of other forward-thinking, “friendlier” countries.

This is therefore the time when the UK should ramp up its Soft Power engagement. It is the perfect year to capitalise on the potential goodwill that the first coronation in over 70 years – that of King Charles III – can stimulate all around the world. But bizarrely, what it is doing instead is cutting investment in its own media and wilfully ignoring the international press. We hear almost daily reports from Foreign Press Association members of their difficulty in accessing the corridors of power, flat refusals to give interviews to even the most prestigious foreign papers and broadcasters... a problem rarely

encountered anywhere else in the world. The insularity which Britain has often been accused of displaying is now in full view.

Recent cuts have seen the BBC Arabic service close after 85 years of service, leaving a gaping hole in the region – and a substantial Soft Power loss – which others, less benign, are no doubt eager to fill. The public broadcaster, revered by millions across the world, has seen its overall reach significantly reduced in the last year, both at local and national level. And the threats to sell off Chanel 4, now thankfully aborted, have reverberated around the globe with a chilling effect. There is also negligence, by this government and other institutions, in the lack of interaction with international media, a key stakeholder in the whole promotion of positive image through Soft Power.

This means missing a trick – and an easy, cheap one at that. While billions are being spent on defence, Soft Power is being bled dry through a thousand small cuts or refusal to engage, which arguably make little sense budget-wise but result in a reputation damage worldwide. An avoidable and tragic loss of invaluable goodwill that is difficult to justify.

The divorce from the EU, the recent political turmoil, a crisis of leadership and an arguably diminished competence in many spheres (economy, health, education etc.) give the impression of a system at breaking point.

And without investment and positive engagement with both national and international media, the UK risks projecting an image of a declining nation rather than the one it wishes to promote.



What's Next for the Commonwealth?



Ed Vaizey
Member of the
House of Lords

The Commonwealth occupies a unique place in the British constitution and our history. It is embodied in our laws and part of the formal title of our foreign ministry – the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Its headquarters is in London. Its head is our King, Charles III, who is also incidentally the monarch of 14 other member countries. Some see it as a relic of Empire, others as Britain's unique Soft Power opportunity.

The Commonwealth has had its fair share of challenges and opportunities. Some countries who were never part of the British Empire have decided to join. Other countries have left. And there have been deep political divides. Nevertheless, the Commonwealth survives. It is bound together partly by (complex) history, language, legal systems, and even sport.

Understanding the trade and Soft Power advantages of the Commonwealth is complex. The UK's trade with Commonwealth nations represents just under 10% of our global trade – and much of that represented by just five members. By far, our biggest trading partners are the United States and the European Union. There have been attempts to create free trade zones within the Commonwealth, but more recently the focus on trade seems to have been simply an attempt to repackage already existing global initiatives. No one can really argue that the Commonwealth gives Britain a unique economic advantage.

In fact, it could be argued that the Commonwealth acts, perhaps paradoxically, as a kind of brake on Britain fully taking its place in the world as a modern global trading nation. We can sometimes miss the opportunities that our competitors are taking up with gusto. There are huge benefits, for example, to be gained by Britain engaging in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Our trade with ASEAN, for example, is just a quarter of our trade with the Commonwealth,

yet ASEAN is now in effect the fifth richest nation on earth.

I am not arguing that we should turn our backs on the Commonwealth or disband the organisation. No one would seriously ask Britain to give up something of value, even if it is difficult to quantify. But we need to modernise it and put our role within it into perspective. Not every country in the Commonwealth shares our values, and not all will be effective trading partners. We should perhaps pivot harder towards organisations and alliances that promote open economies and liberal systems of government.

As King Charles prepares for his coronation, there is no one better to think deeply about the role the Commonwealth plays in Britain's Soft Power. He has far too great a sense of duty to ever voluntarily give up his thrones. But the transformation of Barbados from monarchy to republic was handled deftly and probably enhanced Britain's reputation there and abroad. The time may come when King Charles and the UK is faced with other calls by countries to change their status. Rather than resist, we should welcome the birth of a modern Commonwealth and the opportunity to enhance our Soft Power.



Sustainable Tourism is a Ticket to Soft Power for Smaller Nations.



Fredrik Reinfeldt
Former Prime Minister
of Sweden

The last decade has seen an unprecedented rise of authoritarian views and aggressive nationalism. As if you can get your way in the world if you threaten or bully anyone or any entity that might question you. The real low point in this development was of course the unprovoked and illegal Russian attack on its independent and peaceful neighbour Ukraine.

After years of slipping further into this dark new reality, we saw signs of change in 2022. Russia has in a short time lost much of its attractiveness in other parts of the world, especially in Western-oriented democracies. Political leaders promoting populist agendas, like Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, and Marine le Pen, have lost elections.

The gathering of support from democracies around the world for Ukraine has reminded us of something else, there is an alternative way to win influence that is not built on fear and suppression. The Ukrainians are not only fighting to keep an aggressor from invading their country, they fight for important values, like freedom and openness. They fight for the right to become something they believe is attractive, they stand against the threat of hard power, because they are affected by the influence of Soft Power.

If you, like me, have grown up in Sweden, you can easily relate to the difference in view on how to use power to influence others. Under the Cold War, Sweden was squeezed between the Soviet Union and the United States. We were threatened from the East and attracted by the West. When Joseph Nye, the Harvard professor, defined the ability to influence others through the concept of Soft Power, he very much took the US as an example.

The American culture, films from Hollywood, and the lifestyle and clothing exported from the US created a will to belong.

This was of course easier to achieve given that the knowledge of the English language is widely spread in the world. The use of their Soft Power became even more interesting when they were able to link their cultural importance with support for their view of democracy and freedom of expression.

Could the concept of Soft Power be understood and used also for small and medium-sized countries, and applied to challenges that have grown in our day and age, like sustainability? Not without challenges, I would say.

There will be a language barrier, and for most of smaller countries in the world, the knowledge about individual nations is not widespread and often outdated. To be able to succeed, it needs often to start with a visit. Therefore, everything linked to travelling and tourism has an increasing importance.

Any country that can showcase a society under a sustainable transformation will face an increased interest. It feels good to be in a more sustainable environment to start with, and it gives an important example for ideas and perspectives to bring home. If tourism in the past has been more to seek sun and history, I think this will rebalance to more of learning about and experiencing sustainable conditions.

In Sweden we welcome tourists that want to flee the sun and extreme heat, who want to explore untouched nature, bathe in clean water and breath fresh air. If you can combine that with sustainable cities, you can attract even more people.

This will create an important boost for Soft Power in our time – the will to see examples of what a more sustainable future could look like, and to desire to bring those new lessons home.



Soft Power, at the Professional Level.



Dr Giannina Warren

Senior Lecturer,
MA Place Branding,
Middlesex University
London

Soft Power has risen to prominence across the international landscape as governments understand that their ability to consistently attract tourists, inward investment, retain talent, and enjoy a positive reputation among both internal and external audiences relies on their capacity to shift perceptions through strategic narrative, story-telling and communicative action, rather than through economic or militaristic might.

In the post-pandemic era, cities, regions, and countries are having to cope with increased migration, climate action mitigation and sustainability goals, shifting work patterns, and increased tourism competition. This has brought the practice and profession of 'place branding' to the fore, as places attempt to position themselves favourably in the hearts and minds of target audiences in pursuit of sustainable economic, social, and cultural prosperity goals.

As such, the need for trained personnel who understand the nuances of place branding strategies and implementation is growing exponentially, and governments are having to significantly ramp up their capacity in marketing, communications, branding, tourism, economic development, and resident engagement.

The interdisciplinary and professional field of place branding is in its nascent stages but is experiencing pioneering growth as it carves out new territory, especially as cities and countries prioritise their branding efforts as a way to regain economic and cultural viability and liveability under new norms.

What this means is that as places have emerged as strategic sites of cultural, institutional, and financial competition, a heightened degree of power and influence has been afforded to the 'transnational class' whose job it is to promote them.

Despite the highly influential and impactful nature of this profession, the work remains largely invisible.

Further, the public sector has remained consistently slow in catching up to norms embraced in the private corporate sphere that recognises the central, strategic, and necessary role that the branding and marketing function plays in achieving organisational goals. Too often, the role of marketers is overlooked in governmental policy processes, viewing the promotional function as an add-on, a 'nice to have', or an expensive cost centre brought in too late in the process to properly impact on outcomes.

As a former practitioner in the field, and in my academic research, I have witnessed too many scenarios where place marketers are undermined, misunderstood, or worse, misaligned in their efforts to interject in political and policy briefings related to broader economic, cultural, social or sustainability goals. Despite the tacit understanding by practitioners that the work is highly strategic, driven by consumer research, and measurable, far too often their expertise is considered solely in relation to the design and distribution of marketing collateral, publicity materials, or social media outreach – and within budgets and timeframes that diminish their ability to achieve lasting results.

Part of the problem is that the work of place branding is not yet professionalised. Practitioners come to the career from a variety of backgrounds, and there does not yet exist a clear educational pathway to achieve the knowledge, skills and credentials required to do the job.

While tourism marketing is a long-established practice, with existing opportunities to improve skills or acquire credentials and degrees, the discipline of place branding requires a broader, more holistic understanding of the nuances of a city, country, or region.

The work is politically contingent, but also transcends political cycles. It is largely driven by economic



considerations, but judged on social value. It leverages transferable marketing skills in data analysis, strategic planning, and campaign implementation, but operates in a broader sphere where neither the product nor the audience can be closely defined. It requires the ability to work with a vast array of brand touchpoints across a never-ending landscape.

Place branding offers a challenging stakeholder environment and demands strong leadership from practitioners versed not only in marketing, branding, communications, and competitive strategy, but who also possess

extraordinary relationship management skills, and an ability to straddle the public/private divide.

Further, the work, by its nature being so contingent on the dynamic, ever-changing, 360-degree nature of place, is neither completely neutral, objective, or rational – and in fact relies heavily on the personal and subjective investment of social and cultural capital, as well as emotional performances of legitimacy to do the job.

In short, place marketers must bring their 'whole selves' to their work and are constantly fighting for legitimacy within the value chains

in which they operate. To do so they must leverage strong social and professional networks to maintain constant visibility, and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to furthering their knowledge, skills and expertise so as to be seen as credible in a fast-paced and ever-changing industry.

In addition to the softer diplomatic skills required to navigate a constantly changing economic and stakeholder environment and potentially tricky political climate, place marketers must also possess a broad spectrum of 'hard' skills in public relations, marketing, advertising, and brand strategy,



maintain up-to-date skills in media relations, metric-driven campaign measurement techniques, strategic communications planning, visual and videographic story-telling, and most recently, social and digital interactive platforms.

The speed and accessibility of ever-changing 24/7 media platforms has also necessitated an 'always on' attitude among practitioners who feel they can never fully step away from their work. This leads promotional actors to pursue increasingly complicated means of measuring their outputs and outcomes, in an attempt to quantify their impact on citizen engagement and the overall success of the place's reputation at home and abroad.

Until now, options for practitioners looking to advance their knowledge and skills were limited. Further, whilst academic enquiry into the discipline has advanced over the last decade, the worlds of academia and industry rarely collide.

Middlesex University London seeks to redress this gap, by offering the world's first practical MA in Place Branding. It will combine theory with practice, providing an online, comprehensive, high-flex educational solution for early-career professionals looking to elevate their careers in cities, regions, and countries around the world.

Students will benefit from industry and institutional partnerships across the sector that will offer guest lectures, insider information on case histories and client challenges, innovative proprietary products and frameworks for place brand research and strategy, as well as offering internship pathways and networking opportunities. The course will be taught by leading practitioners and academic experts in the field.

This is the world's first postgraduate degree offer in place branding – whilst there are other post-graduate studies that focus on tourism, place management, place leadership, or public administration – this is the first to combine both academic and practical insights on nation, city, and regional branding led by academic research and industry-leading practical implementation.

Embedded in the degree will be access to world-leading practitioners, academics, industry experts and firms, agencies, government bodies, DMOs, and people working in the field from all over the world. There will be an opportunity to work towards a real-world client problem or brief for credit. Most valuable will be the development of a community of practice who can support each other in legitimising the profession and helping to build inroads within political and policy value chains.

Events such as the Global Soft Power Summit are so valuable in fostering an environment where knowledge is shared, and networks are formed. As the field expands, so too should the training and accreditation opportunities available to professionals who are committed to advancing their place's cultural, social, and economic goals.

As we look towards the rapidly changing global environment, we must recognise that the skills and knowledge that place marketers held in the past might not be adequate – and pathways to develop our understanding of the field, as well as train competent and adaptable practitioners for the future – are needed to overcome the credibility gap in a vital profession that has so far been largely undermined and under-represented in the public and professional spheres.

Soft Power to Improve Sanitation.



Jack Sim
Founder,
The World Toilet
Organization

In 2001, there were 2.6 billion people without access to proper sanitation, but toilets were not talked about much. Because sanitation was considered an uncomfortable topic, it was often discussed as a part of the more appealing "Water Agenda". However, using technical language such as "Faecal Sludge Management" did not attract media attention since it was not commonly understood by readers.

I believed that we needed to use clear and simple language to address this issue. To break the taboo surrounding sanitation, I combined humour and serious facts to form the World Toilet Organization (WTO), a pun on the World Trade Organization. I hoped that the World Trade Organization would sue us, which would draw global attention to the issue of sanitation. Although this did not happen, our marketing strategy was successful. The global media was interested in the WTO, and it helped legitimise the importance of sanitation with massive coverage reaching 2-3 billion readers annually. Our movement gained support from large NGOs such as Unicef, Wateraid UK, UNEP, UNDP, Red Cross, Sulabh International, Water.org, and the Gates Foundation, as well as individuals worldwide, and together, we started celebrating 19 November as World Toilet Day.

In 2013, our organisation's founding day, 19 November, was officially adopted by all 193 countries in the United Nations General Assembly as the official UN World Toilet Day.

Our "Theory of Change" is based on the idea that by giving stakeholders what they want, we can align incentives and encourage them to take ownership of sanitation. We have identified eleven key strategies to achieve this:

- 1. Creating Powerful Stories and Soundbites - By

sharing compelling stories about sanitation, we can attract media attention and generate advertising revenue.

- 2. Making Sanitation an Election Issue - By promising to improve sanitation, politicians can gain media attention and win popular votes.
- 3. Mobilising Bureaucrats - Policymakers want to please their political bosses and can allocate budgets to improve sanitation.
- 4. Publishing and Validating - Academics want to publish their research to validate our strategy and hypothesis.
- 5. Leveraging Corporate Support - We aim to create win-win strategies through shared value and corporate social responsibility programs, positioning sanitation as a cheaper form of preventive medicine.
- 6. Create compelling stories for donors, aid agencies, and funders to influence public policies and integrate strategies with blended capital from public-private partnerships.
- 7. Mobilise NGOs by providing funding for them to build toilets.
- 8. Attract celebrities to join in for publicity and goodwill.
- 9. Help social entrepreneurs create sustainable business models by facilitating their scaling across different sectors and geographies.
- 10. Make toilets more attractive by positioning them as status symbols and using social pressure to encourage people to take ownership of their upkeep and maintenance.
- 11. In summary, all it took was the power of storytelling, framing narratives, and incentivising the ecosystem to align towards a common mission.

By using cost-benefit analysis to highlight the benefits of sanitation, we hope to make the case for increased investment in sanitation infrastructure and services. By bringing together different stakeholders, we believe we can make significant progress in improving global sanitation.

To make progress in the Sanitation Agenda, we need to consider its interconnection with health, income, safety, environmental pollution, tourism, treatment, recycling, agriculture, and the overall quality of life and dignity of communities. Sanitation cannot be treated in isolation, so we need a comprehensive and holistic approach to tackle this issue.

To achieve this, we must create tailored incentives for all stakeholders involved in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For instance, we can unlock the entrepreneurial spirit and work ethic of the poor and empower them through technology and downstream production. By doing so, they can generate income to purchase toilets, clean water, housing, education, healthcare, and all the other necessities that contribute to an improved quality of life beyond sanitation.

The key is to bring all stakeholders together and align their incentives toward a common mission. Through this approach, we can achieve sustainable sanitation and the associated benefits to health, livelihood, income, safety, environmental sustainability, and overall quality of life.

Over the past 22 years, we have made significant progress in improving access to proper sanitation around the world.



2.4 billion people have gained access, and now 193 countries celebrate UN World Toilet Day on November 19th every year. Through our efforts, we have successfully broken the taboo around toilets and reached an annual audience of 2-3 billion people worldwide.

Our World Toilet Summits have left a lasting impact on communities across the globe. For example, we mobilised China and India's sanitation transformations starting in 2004 and 2007, respectively, with over 110 million toilets built in India.

In Brazil, we helped attract \$10 billion in investments for sewage treatment plants since 2019 and engaged all 36 states of Nigeria towards becoming Open Defecation Free by 2025. We are proud to have built a global movement where stakeholders take action in their own names and improve sanitation in their own locations.

Despite competing with other major issues like climate change and sports in the media, we have managed to keep the sanitation agenda highly visible in global awareness.

Our impact over the last 22 years:

- + 2.4 billion people gained access to proper sanitation
- + 193 countries celebrate UN World Toilet Day 19 Nov annually
- + We broke taboo on toilets worldwide with 2-3 billion audience per year
- + Our 19 World Toilet Summits all over the globe left a legacy of change:
 - Mobilised China sanitation transformation since 2004
 - Mobilised Indian sanitation transformation since 2007 with 110 millions built
 - Successfully attracted USD 10 billion investments into Brazil Sewage Treatment Plants since 2019
 - Engaged all 36 states of Nigeria towards Open Defecation Free status by 2025
 - Built a global movement where stakeholders took actions in their own names and improved sanitation in their own locations

Nation Branding is Not Just Logos. The Need for a Strategic Approach.



Dr Keith Dinnie

Reader in Marketing and Associate Dean for Business and Community Engagement, University of Dundee School of Business

Recent years have seen steadily increasing interest in the fields of nation branding, public diplomacy, and Soft Power. Whilst Soft Power flows – at implementation of nation branding and public diplomacy, the interplay between nation branding and public diplomacy remains somewhat elusive.

For some, nation branding is a component of public diplomacy. For others, this view is inverted, with public diplomacy considered a component of nation branding. There is a rationale for both perspectives. However, when policy makers are contemplating developing a nation branding strategy it is important to avoid falling into the familiar, yet disappointingly still very prevalent, trap of treating nation branding as if it is no more than just advertising or logos.

When the first edition of my book, *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice* was published in 2007, there was still considerable resistance within diplomatic circles to the concept of nation branding.

A diplomat at the Washington DC embassy of a major Asian nation told me that he had been sidelined and rebuked for suggesting to the ambassador that their country should think about developing a nation branding strategy. 'We are not salesmen for our country', was the dismissive response to that proposal.

The world has moved on since then, and more and more countries have allocated resources to developing their nation brands. But the perception that nation branding is just about advertising and logos still persists amongst some audiences, often coupled with an instinctive aversion to the very idea of treating a country as a brand.

For some, the terms 'brand' and 'branding' carry connotations of manipulation and superficiality,

with branding a practice unworthy of inflicting upon an entity such as a country. Such a perception is completely understandable when one looks at the unethical practices of some companies whose branding is designed to mislead rather than to inform, the proliferation of 'greenwashing' branding by companies worldwide a case in point. So what makes nation branding different from that kind of deceitful activity?

Done right, nation branding is not about selling an unrealistic image of a country or making exaggerated claims that cannot be backed up. Rather, nation branding seeks to narrow the identity-image gap that impacts on countries' ability to attract investment, export their branded products, attract talent, promote tourism, and play a positive role on the world stage. This cannot be achieved by advertising and logos alone, although the power of advertising and logos should not be completely discounted.

It is widely accepted that advertising tends to play a much more important role in consumer-facing contexts such as tourism promotion than it does in the business-to-business domain, where relationship-building and personal contacts through events, such as trade missions and trade shows, come more to the fore.

Nation branding can certainly benefit by including good advertising and design, but nation branding is much more than that. It requires a comprehensive strategy, adequately funded and consistently supported by political and diplomatic policy makers. The nation brand and resultant Soft Power can be formed by a range of policies and actions that would not normally be considered 'branding'.

In the case of the United States, which has invested consistently over decades in a strategic approach to public diplomacy, the US brand has been strengthened through education and cultural exchanges, journalism

and broadcasting, and humanitarian interventions delivered through the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Other countries have sought to enhance their Soft Power through nation branding strategies that highlight their country's distinctiveness via gastronomy, music, and nature, as in the case of Brand Peru whose implementation and dissemination began in 2011 under the auspices of PROMPERÚ. Such approaches are more focused on reaching out to international audiences and making emotional and cultural connections rather than belching propaganda out into the world.

So where to start when a country is seeking to develop its nation brand? What are the practical steps? Not commissioning an advertising campaign would be a good starting point.

Instead, the focus should be on bringing different stakeholders together to foster a sense of shared purpose with clearly defined goals. The advertising should come after the stakeholder engagement, not before. Several countries have successfully adopted an inclusive, stakeholder-based approach to their nation branding.

Some examples include Chile through the Fundación Imagen de Chile; Ireland through its 'Food Brand Ireland' strategy, bringing together farmers, growers, fishermen and food processors; and Sweden through the work of the Swedish Institute, often involving domestic stakeholders such as leading Swedish corporations IKEA, Volvo, H&M, and Spotify.

As more countries embrace the potential of nation branding to enhance their Soft Power, it will be interesting to see which countries will emerge in the coming years to challenge established countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany at the top of the Global Soft Power Index.



Soft Power and the Rise of AI.



Peggy Liu
Chairperson,
Joint US-China
Collaboration on Clean
Energy (JUCCCE)

With generative AI, everything is about to change everywhere all at once. Nations can choose to jump on board and use AI to compound their Soft Power or ignore it and possibly succumb to narratives shaped by algorithms.

Within the next single-digit years, AI will go from a 'look wow!' party trick to a sophisticated, omni-presence. Here are four reasons why Nations should get their AI Soft Power training wheels on now:

+Digital diplomacy. AI levels the playing field for developing nations. A tiny startup nation like the sovereign and independent Nation of Hawaii has little or no resources dedicated to becoming more influential on the world stage when their meagre resources are dedicated to survival. But they have much to offer the world in indigenous wisdom and a powerful lineage on which to build a brand. With little effort, Nations can build a strong digital presence by combining human sensibilities with generative AI social media content creation apps.

+Language translation. AI levels the playing field for non-English speaking nations. Most English-speaking nations underestimate what an advantage language is for them in a world that is dominated by English. China's ability to foster greater understanding and collaboration with other countries is severely handicapped because its key influencers do not speak English at all or well enough to emote effectively. Interpreters can soon use AI to effortlessly translate communications and focus their own time on the difficult work of capturing the nuances of cultural bridging.

+Reduction of polarisation. AI's conversational replies can reduce the dominating effect that a few loud angry voices have on the Internet. Shifting perspectives,

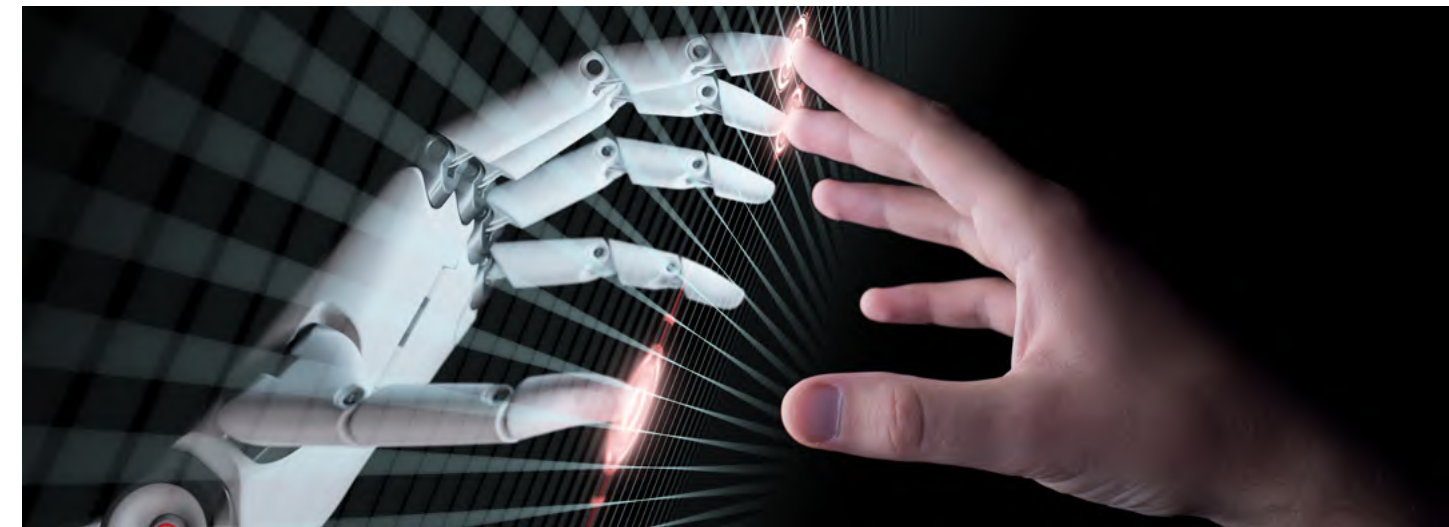
one social media thread at a time, can help reduce the 'Us vs Them' narrative that reductionist media shapes. While ChatGPT today does not have the bandwidth to search the Internet, humans can manually detect negative conversation threads and use AI to generate a reply that makes the poster feel heard and validated while providing them with a more nuanced perspective. The more a nation jumps in with positive conversational micro engagements, the more momentum its Soft Power builds.

+Cultural accessibility. AI's ability to create art and music can help Nations reach the hearts of more people. In an environment where 'foreign' is feared, generative AI like Dall-E can help onboard a wider range of audiences by creating new pieces of fusion art or music that are inspired by a nation's cultural traditions but feel familiar and locally appropriate. Soft Power begins when curiosity arises.

Luckily for us, AI still lacks the magic we humans have to mesmerise.

+Empathy. True influence is the ability to shift the emotional reaction of others. When I started a collaborative effort to create what ultimately became China's national slogan 'China Dream', I travelled the globe to research how societal shifts were made. I was surprised to find out that speaking to people's hearts, not their heads, was key to rapid societal-scale change. A nation's positive or negative perception depends on its ability to make people feel loved and safe. AI's lack of empathy holds it back from sensing nuanced emotional reactions, and responding in a way that creates a compassionate connection.

+Energetic sensitivity. Soft Power starts with a nation's power to



magnetise people to a certain mood. This mood which I call an 'energetic fingerprint' is the beautiful essence of a nation that manifests as a taste of a dish, the beauty of its people, the colour of its soil, the humidity of its air, the cadence of its dances, the tempo of its music, the romance of its streets, the smell of its forests. The ability to emotionally express the most 'human things' about our Nations with heightened sensitivity is what creates the magnetism of Soft Power. The ability for Hollywood to entice and transport us into a different world is why America is usually a Soft Power leader. AI is a long way from being able to take these sensations and create a vehicle that will simulate a Nation's energetic fingerprint.

+Cultural bridging. Jumping between cultures and languages without hilarious or offensive misunderstandings is a multi-layered effort that requires a bit of guessing people's intentions rather than direct translation. Cultural bridging is difficult to teach in the classroom, and impossible to train AI. In one of my TEDx talks "Cultural Bridges - Service Jobs of the 21st Century" I make the claim that culturally literate people who can build bridges between economic

centres will be drivers of economic growth. Cultural bridges are the most valuable hires in developing a nation's Soft Power.

+Feeling momentum. Changing a nation's ranking on the Global Soft Power Index by Brand Finance requires more than a short-term campaign. It requires building up momentum in an upward spiral of buzz that ultimately shifts perspectives worldwide. In what I term "Tornado Leadership", I advise countries and companies on micro-tactics that create continual engagement in a form of collaborative drafting. Soft Power requires Tornado Leaders who understand how to sense magnetism, momentum, and resonance in groups. AI's decision trees will not be able to feel into this anytime soon.

Humans, we are at a crossroads. Do we intentionally invest in and explore how AI can help nations shape their Soft Power? Or do we passively let AI rapidly evolve its own definition of our Nations' stories?

In the short term, there is a fantastic opportunity for an enterprising startup to create a toolkit of AI apps customised with prompts for nations. In the long term, humans can specialise in what remains our biggest advantage over AI – our senses and hearts.



06































Appendices

Global Soft Power Index

The full breakdown of results by nation brand.

Rank 2023	Rank 2022		Nation Brand		Region	Index Score 2023	Index Score Change	Index Score 2022	Brand Value 2023 (USD bn)	Brand Value Change	Brand Value 2022 (USD bn)
1	1	↔		United States	North America	74.8	+4.1	70.7	\$30,309	+14%	\$26,472
2	2	↔		United Kingdom	Europe	67.3	+2.4	64.9	\$4,797	+17%	\$4,115
3	3	↔		Germany	Europe	65.8	+1.2	64.6	\$5,076	+13%	\$4,504
4	5	↑		Japan	Asia	65.2	+1.7	63.5	\$4,449	+4%	\$4,284
5	4	↓		China	Asia	65.0	+0.8	64.2	\$23,085	+7%	\$21,528
6	6	↔		France	Europe	62.4	+1.8	60.6	\$3,670	+16%	\$3,152
7	7	↔		Canada	North America	60.7	+1.2	59.5	\$2,621	+17%	\$2,238
8	8	↔		Switzerland	Europe	58.5	+2.0	56.6	\$1,032	+3%	\$1,006
9	10	↑		Italy	Europe	56.6	+1.8	54.7	\$2,345	+9%	\$2,155
10	15	↑		United Arab Emirates	MENA	55.2	+3.2	52.0	\$957	+24%	\$773
11	14	↑		Sweden	Europe	55.1	+2.8	52.3	\$861	+10%	\$780
12	11	↓		Spain	Europe	54.9	+1.8	53.0	\$1,739	+15%	\$1,506
13	9	↓		Russia	Europe	54.8	-1.3	56.1	\$680	+6%	\$642
14	13	↓		Australia	Oceania	54.6	+1.9	52.7	\$1,761	+10%	\$1,602
15	12	↓		South Korea	Asia	53.9	+1.0	52.9	\$2,081	+9%	\$1,911
16	16	↔		Netherlands	Europe	53.7	+3.1	50.6	\$1,345	+17%	\$1,151
17	17	↔		Norway	Europe	52.6	+2.9	49.7	\$586	+19%	\$493
18	18	↔		Denmark	Europe	51.8	+3.0	48.8	\$583	+19%	\$489
19	24	↑		Saudi Arabia	MENA	51.3	+4.1	47.1	\$941	+22%	\$770
20	19	↓		Belgium	Europe	51.2	+2.8	48.5	\$740	+14%	\$647
21	20	↓		Singapore	Asia	51.0	+2.6	48.5	\$622	+14%	\$546
22	25	↑		Finland	Europe	50.7	+3.5	47.1	\$370	+10%	\$335
23	22	↓		Turkey	Europe	50.4	+2.6	47.8	\$440	+6%	\$417
24	26	↑		Qatar	MENA	49.9	+4.1	45.8	\$240	+10%	\$217
25	27	↑		Austria	Europe	49.9	+6.5	43.4	\$627	+10%	\$570
26	21	↓		New Zealand	Oceania	49.8	+1.4	48.4	\$280	+13%	\$248
27	23	↓		Israel	MENA	48.4	+0.9	47.6	\$416	+6%	\$394
28	29	↑		India	Asia	47.0	+3.8	43.2	\$2,924	+13%	\$2,595
29	30	↑		Ireland	Europe	46.7	+4.8	41.9	\$833	+14%	\$728
30	32	↑		Portugal	Europe	46.6	+5.6	41.0	\$270	+16%	\$234

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Nation Brand	Familiarity	Reputation	Influence	Business & Trade	Governance	International Relations	Culture & Heritage	Media & Communication	Education & Science	People & Values	Sustainability	Medals
	9.3	7.1	7.5	7.9	5.9	8.3	6.9	6.5	8.4	4.6	6.9	16
	8.7	7.3	6.5	6.9	6.3	7.7	6.5	6.0	5.5	4.8	6.8	11
	8.3	7.3	6.0	7.4	6.6	7.7	6.0	5.2	5.9	4.8	7.4	11
	8.2	7.4	5.8	7.7	6.1	6.6	6.0	4.6	7.0	5.0	7.3	8
	8.4	6.5	7.1	7.7	4.4	6.5	5.3	4.0	6.9	3.6	5.7	6
	8.5	7.0	5.7	6.8	5.4	7.1	7.0	5.1	4.7	4.7	6.5	5
	8.1	7.5	5.3	6.8	6.4	6.6	5.2	5.1	4.6	5.6	7.0	13
	7.3	7.5	4.9	7.0	6.5	6.5	5.3	4.7	4.4	5.2	7.2	13
	8.4	7.0	5.1	6.3	4.5	5.8	6.9	4.5	3.5	5.1	5.6	6
	6.1	6.8	5.5	6.5	5.2	6.1	4.6	4.2	4.1	4.4	5.9	2
	6.7	7.2	4.4	6.5	6.1	6.0	5.0	4.6	4.4	5.2	7.2	3
	7.9	6.9	5.0	5.8	4.5	5.4	6.6	4.6	3.4	5.1	5.7	3
	8.2	5.3	6.1	4.9	3.9	5.3	4.4	3.9	5.6	3.1	4.5	1
	7.7	7.1	4.6	6.2	5.4	5.6	5.1	4.6	4.0	5.0	6.5	-
	7.1	6.5	4.8	6.6	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.2	5.1	4.3	5.8	-
	6.7	7.0	4.4	6.3	5.5	5.6	5.1	4.4	4.0	5.2	7.0	1
	6.2	7.1	4.2	6.0	5.9	5.5	4.8	4.4	4.2	5.1	7.0	4
	6.2	7.0	4.1	6.1	5.6	5.4	4.7	4.4	4.0	5.1	6.9	-
	6.3	6.2	5.4	5.7	4.4	5.8	3.9	3.8	3.3	3.9	5.1	-
	6.3	6.8	4.5	5.8	5.1	5.5	4.6	4.3	3.7	4.6	6.2	-
	6.0	6.8	4.4	6.3	5.2	5.0	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.5	6.3	-
	5.8	7.0	4.0	6.0	5.7	5.2	4.4	4.3	4.1	5.0	6.9	-
	7.0	6.3	5.1	5.5	3.9	5.3	4.9	3.9	3.1	4.1	4.7	-
	5.3	6.5	4.9	5.9	4.6	5.4	4.3	4.1	3.6	4.1	5.5	-
	6.1	6.8	4.2	5.6	5.2	5.1	4.8	4.3	3.7	4.6	6.2	-
	6.3	6.9	4.0	5.8	5.4	4.9	4.5	4.3	3.6	5.0	6.4	-
	6.4	5.8	4.8	4.9	3.9	5.2	3.8	3.8	4.5	3.3	4.7	-
	7.4	5.8	4.8	4.9	2.7	4.2	4.9	3.2	3.8	3.6	3.6	1
	5.9	6.6	3.8	5.4	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.1	3.3	4.9	5.8	-
	6.7	6.6	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.5	5.1	3.9	2.9	4.7	5.1	1

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● Gold digits | 1st in Class ● Silver digits | 2nd in Class ● Bronze digits | 3rd in Class

The full breakdown of results by nation brand.

Rank 2023	Rank 2022		Nation Brand		Region	Index Score 2023	Index Score Change	Index Score 2022	Brand Value 2023 (USD bn)	Brand Value Change	Brand Value 2022 (USD bn)
31	28	↓		Brazil	LATAM & Caribbean	46.2	+2.9	43.4	\$825	+10%	\$753
32	41	↑		Luxembourg	Europe	45.3	+7.7	37.6	\$129	+15%	\$112
33	40	↑		Poland	Europe	45.1	+6.9	38.2	\$790	+11%	\$714
34	37	↑		Iceland	Europe	44.7	+6.2	38.6	\$30	+14%	\$27
35	36	↑		Kuwait	MENA	44.3	+5.2	39.1	\$149	+3%	\$144
36	33	↓		Greece	Europe	44.3	+3.9	40.4	\$119	+10%	\$108
37	51	↑		Ukraine	Europe	44.3	+10.1	34.2	\$83	-3%	\$85
38	31	↓		Egypt	MENA	43.0	+1.5	41.6	\$225	+5%	\$214
39	39	↔		Malaysia	Asia	42.6	+4.1	38.5	\$512	+3%	\$499
40	34	↓		South Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	42.5	+2.3	40.2	\$225	+4%	\$216
41	35	↓		Thailand	Asia	42.4	+2.2	40.2	\$506	+5%	\$480
42	38	↓		Argentina	LATAM & Caribbean	42.2	+3.7	38.5	\$212	+6%	\$200
43	44	↑		Czech Republic	Europe	42.0	+6.7	35.3	\$437	+14%	\$385
44	42	↓		Mexico	LATAM & Caribbean	41.0	+3.4	37.5	\$797	+3%	\$772
45	47	↑		Indonesia	Asia	40.9	+6.2	34.8	\$1,049	+18%	\$890
46	49	↑		Oman	MENA	40.7	+6.1	34.6	\$45	+13%	\$40
47	43	↓		Croatia	Europe	40.7	+5.3	35.4	\$53	+2%	\$52
48	45	↓		Hungary	Europe	40.5	+5.3	35.2	\$215	+3%	\$208
49	57	↑		Georgia	Europe	40.0	+6.6	33.4	\$22	+23%	\$18
50	68	↑		Bahrain	MENA	40.0	+8.0	32.0	\$27	+16%	\$23
51	91	↑		Estonia	Europe	40.0	+10.1	29.9	\$48	+9%	\$44
52	64	↑		Slovenia	Europe	39.6	+6.9	32.6	\$90	+3%	\$87
53	56	↑		Jordan	MENA	39.5	+6.1	33.5	\$27	+8%	\$25
54	55	↑		Chile	LATAM & Caribbean	39.5	+5.7	33.8	\$270	+2%	\$263
55	46	↓		Morocco	MENA	39.2	+4.3	34.9	\$91	+14%	\$80
56	62	↑		Bulgaria	Europe	39.2	+6.3	32.9	\$84	+19%	\$71
57	77	↑		Azerbaijan	Europe	39.1	+7.8	31.3	\$37	+30%	\$28
58	48	↓		Colombia	LATAM & Caribbean	39.0	+4.2	34.7	\$249	+3%	\$242
59	52	↓		Maldives	Asia	38.9	+4.9	34.0	\$3	+15%	\$3
60	87	↑		Lithuania	Europe	38.9	+8.8	30.1	\$70	+4%	\$67

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Global Soft Power Index | 31-60

Nation Brand	Familiarity	Reputation	Influence	Business & Trade	Governance	International Relations	Culture & Heritage	Media & Communication	Education & Science	People & Values	Sustainability	Medals
	7.6	6.3	4.4	4.6	2.9	3.9	5.4	3.5	2.6	4.4	4.3	2
	4.3	6.6	3.9	5.2	5.2	4.9	4.0	4.0	3.4	4.2	5.7	-
	6.1	6.2	4.0	4.9	4.0	4.6	3.9	3.7	3.1	4.3	5.1	-
	5.2	6.7	3.4	4.9	5.2	4.4	4.1	4.0	3.3	4.7	6.4	1
	4.7	6.1	4.5	5.0	4.0	4.7	3.5	3.5	3.0	4.0	4.7	-
	6.6	6.4	3.7	4.4	3.6	4.0	5.5	3.5	2.7	4.6	4.7	1
	7.3	5.8	4.7	3.8	3.4	3.9	3.0	3.5	2.7	3.5	3.8	1
	7.1	6.0	4.1	4.0	2.9	3.9	4.6	3.3	2.6	3.6	4.0	1
	5.3	6.1	4.1	4.9	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.0	3.9	4.6	-
	6.3	5.8	4.1	4.4	3.1	3.9	4.0	3.4	2.6	3.6	4.3	-
	6.5	6.1	3.9	4.8	3.0	3.4	4.4	3.3	2.6	4.3	4.2	-
	6.5	6.1	3.8	4.1	3.0	3.8	4.7	3.5	2.5	4.0	4.1	-
	4.9	6.2	3.7	4.6	3.8	4.1	3.9	3.5	2.9	4.3	4.9	-
	7.0	5.7	3.8	4.2	2.5	3.4	4.6	3.3	2.2	4.0	3.6	1
	5.5	5.9	3.8	4.5	3.2	3.7	3.7	3.3	2.7	4.0	4.3	-
	3.5	6.0	3.9	4.6	4.2	4.2	3.5	3.5	3.0	4.3	4.4	1
	4.7	6.2	3.6	4.4	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.5	2.9	4.2	4.8	-
	5.0	5.9	3.8	4.2	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.4	2.8	3.7	4.5	-
	3.8	5.9	3.7	4.4	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.1	4.1	4.5	-
	3.5	5.9	3.9	4.5	3.8	4.1	3.4	3.5	2.9	3.9	4.4	-
	3.3	6.0	3.6	4.5	4.1	3.9	3.3	3.7	3.3	4.1	5.3	-
	3.7	6.0	3.7	4.3	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.1	3.9	4.6	-
	4.1	5.8	3.8	4.1	3.7	4.1	3.6	3.6	2.8	3.9	4.0	-
	5.1	5.8	3.6	4.1	3.2	3.6	3.6	3.6	2.6	3.8	4.3	-
	5.1	5.8	3.7	4.1	3.1	3.7	4.1	3.1	2.5	4.0	3.9	-
	4.6	5.9	3.5	4.1	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.5	2.7	3.8	4.7	-
	3.7	5.4	4.1	4.0	3.3	3.9	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.6	4.0	-
	5.7	5.4	3.7	3.9	2.7	3.4	3.9	3.3	2.5	4.0	3.9	-
	4.5	6.4	3.3	4.2	3.3	3.2	3.8	3.5	2.5	4.5	4.6	1
	3.5	5.8	3.5	4.3	3.6	4.1	3.4	3.7	2.9	4.0	4.9	-































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The full breakdown of results by nation brand.

Rank 2023	Rank 2022		Nation Brand		Region	Index Score 2023	Index Score Change	Index Score 2022	Brand Value 2023 (USD bn)	Brand Value Change	Brand Value 2022 (USD bn)
61	60	↓		Philippines	Asia	38.7	+5.4	33.2	\$526	+9%	\$481
62	84	↑		Slovakia	Europe	38.7	+7.7	30.9	\$133	+18%	\$114
63	66	↑		Uruguay	LATAM & Caribbean	38.4	+6.2	32.3	\$58	+17%	\$49
64	50	↓		Romania	Europe	38.4	+4.0	34.4	\$210	+10%	\$191
65	99	↑		Latvia	Europe	38.4	+9.1	29.3	\$44	+9%	\$40
66	53	↓		Cuba	LATAM & Caribbean	38.3	+4.3	34.0	\$43	-	-
67	71	↑		Mauritius	Sub-Saharan Africa	38.0	+6.1	31.9	\$11	+1%	\$11
68	58	↓		Cyprus	Europe	37.8	+4.5	33.3	\$27	+17%	\$23
69	59	↓		Vietnam	Asia	37.8	+4.4	33.3	\$498	+16%	\$431
70	54	↓		Panama	LATAM & Caribbean	37.7	+3.8	33.9	\$61	+0%	\$60
71	65	↓		Malta	Europe	37.5	+5.1	32.5	\$16	+4%	\$15
72	67	↓		Costa Rica	LATAM & Caribbean	37.3	+5.2	32.1	\$34	+14%	\$30
73	78	↑		Serbia	Europe	36.9	+5.7	31.2	\$70	+19%	\$59
74	90	↑		Seychelles	Sub-Saharan Africa	36.9	+6.9	30.0	\$1	+12%	\$1
75	80	↑		Paraguay	LATAM & Caribbean	36.8	+5.7	31.1	\$33	+11%	\$30
76	82	↑		Peru	LATAM & Caribbean	36.8	+5.8	31.0	\$148	+8%	\$137
77	63	↓		Iran	MENA	36.7	+4.0	32.7	\$192	+3%	\$187
78	97	↑		Montenegro	Europe	36.5	+7.2	29.3	\$4	+12%	\$4
79	88	↑		Kazakhstan	Asia	36.5	+6.4	30.0	\$218	+19%	\$184
80	93	↑		Barbados	LATAM & Caribbean	36.4	+6.7	29.7	\$5	+21%	\$4
81	61	↓		Dominican Republic	LATAM & Caribbean	36.4	+3.5	32.9	\$86	+17%	\$74
82	92	↑		Bolivia	LATAM & Caribbean	36.4	+6.5	29.9	\$23	+4%	\$22
83	76	↓		Tunisia	MENA	36.4	+5.1	31.3	\$28	+13%	\$25
84	83	↓		Pakistan	Asia	36.4	+5.4	31.0	\$232	+8%	\$215
85	74	↓		Rwanda	Sub-Saharan Africa	36.2	+4.8	31.4	\$11	+17%	\$9
86	75	↓		Algeria	MENA	36.0	+4.6	31.4	\$97	+11%	\$87
87	96	↑		Cote d'Ivoire	Sub-Saharan Africa	35.9	+6.4	29.4	\$42	-	-
88	113	↑		Turkmenistan	Asia	35.8	+8.0	27.7	\$41	+11%	\$37
89	79	↓		Lebanon	MENA	35.8	+4.6	31.2	\$9	-	-
90	98	↑		Ecuador	LATAM & Caribbean	35.7	+6.4	29.3	\$43	+10%	\$39

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Global Soft Power Index | 61-90

Nation Brand	Familiarity	Reputation	Influence	Business & Trade	Governance	International Relations	Culture & Heritage	Media & Communication	Education & Science	People & Values	Sustainability	Medals
	5.7	5.7	3.6	4.0	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.1	2.4	4.0	3.8	-
	4.0	6.0	3.6	4.0	3.6	3.7	3.2	3.4	2.7	3.7	4.7	-
	4.4	5.8	3.4	3.9	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.4	2.7	4.0	4.4	-
	5.0	5.8	3.5	4.0	3.2	3.5	3.4	3.2	2.7	3.7	4.2	-
	3.4	5.9	3.6	4.2	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.6	2.9	3.9	4.8	-
	5.7	5.3	3.7	3.5	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.0	2.7	3.9	3.5	-
	3.0	6.0	3.5	4.2	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	2.8	4.2	4.5	-
	3.8	6.0	3.4	4.2	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.4	2.6	4.1	4.3	-
	5.6	5.5	3.5	4.2	2.8	3.2	3.3	2.9	2.5	3.5	4.0	-
	4.1	5.7	3.6	4.3	3.0	3.6	3.2	3.2	2.5	3.5	4.2	-
	3.4	6.1	3.3	4.2	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.4	2.7	4.0	4.4	-
	4.0	6.0	3.3	4.0	3.1	3.4	3.5	3.2	2.6	4.2	4.2	-
	4.4	5.5	3.4	3.8	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.3	2.5	3.5	4.3	-
	2.5	5.9	3.5	4.1	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.3	2.9	4.2	4.5	-
	4.0	5.7	3.5	3.8	2.9	3.3	3.3	3.4	2.7	3.7	4.1	-
	4.7	5.6	3.3	3.8	2.8	3.2	3.7	3.2	2.4	3.9	4.0	-
	6.0	4.6	4.0	3.1	2.5	3.3	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5	3.1	-
	2.9	5.8	3.5	3.8	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.2	2.8	3.8	4.4	-
	3.9	5.5	3.5	3.7	3.0	3.5	3.1	3.1	2.6	3.7	4.2	-
	2.6	5.8	3.4	4.0	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.6	2.7	4.0	4.4	-
	4.0	5.8	3.4	3.9	2.9	3.1	3.4	3.2	2.5	4.0	3.9	-
	3.9	5.4	3.4	3.6	2.9	3.5	3.3	3.4	2.6	3.8	4.2	-
	4.3	5.6	3.5	3.7	2.8	3.3	3.6	3.1	2.4	3.7	3.8	-
	5.8	4.8	3.6	3.5	2.6	3.2	2.9	3.0	2.3	3.4	3.4	-
	3.2	5.3	3.7	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.1	3.1	2.6	3.3	4.1	-
	4.3	5.5	3.5	3.6	2.7	3.5	3.4	3.0	2.4	3.6	3.7	-
	3.4	5.5	3.4	3.9	2.9	3.5	3.4	3.2	2.6	3.6	4.1	-
	2.8	5.4	3.5	3.9	3.1	3.4	3.3	3.3	2.8	3.7	4.0	-
	4.4	5.3	3.5	3.4	2.5	3.2	3.5	3.2	2.2	3.8	3.5	-
	4.1	5.5	3.3	3.7	2.7	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.4	3.8	3.9	-
































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The full breakdown of results by nation brand.

Rank 2023	Rank 2022		Nation Brand		Region	Index Score 2023	Index Score Change	Index Score 2022	Brand Value 2023 (USD bn)	Brand Value Change	Brand Value 2022 (USD bn)
91	102	↑		Nepal	Asia	35.6	+6.5	29.1	\$29	+17%	\$25
92	86	↓		Ghana	Sub-Saharan Africa	35.5	+5.2	30.3	\$63	+10%	\$57
93	69	↓		Nigeria	Sub-Saharan Africa	35.4	+3.4	32.0	\$265	+10%	\$241
94	72	↓		Bosnia and Herzegovina	Europe	35.3	+3.5	31.8	\$14	-	-
95	119	↑		Sudan	Sub-Saharan Africa	35.3	+9.3	26.0	\$18	-	-
96	109	↑		Botswana	Sub-Saharan Africa	35.2	+6.7	28.5	\$17	-	-
97	105	↑		Bangladesh	Asia	35.1	+6.1	29.0	\$508	+37%	\$371
98	101	↑		Tanzania	Sub-Saharan Africa	35.1	+6.0	29.1	\$49	+18%	\$41
99	70	↓		Jamaica	LATAM & Caribbean	35.1	+3.1	32.0	\$10	+16%	\$9
100	95	↓		Kenya	Sub-Saharan Africa	35.0	+5.5	29.5	\$83	+3%	\$80
101	85	↓		Uzbekistan	Asia	35.0	+4.3	30.7	\$99	+32%	\$75
102	94	↓		Madagascar	Sub-Saharan Africa	34.9	+5.4	29.6	\$12	-	-
103	110	↑		Senegal	Sub-Saharan Africa	34.9	+6.5	28.4	\$18	+3%	\$17
104	118	↑		Honduras	LATAM & Caribbean	34.8	+8.3	26.5	\$24	+19%	\$20
105	100	↓		Cambodia	Asia	34.8	+5.6	29.3	\$17	+15%	\$15
106	89	↓		Venezuela	LATAM & Caribbean	34.7	+4.7	30.0	\$29	-	-
107	116	↑		Dem. Rep. Congo	Sub-Saharan Africa	34.4	+7.3	27.1	\$35	+14%	\$31
108	104	↓		Albania	Europe	34.4	+5.3	29.1	\$11	+3%	\$10
109	112	↑		Cameroon	Sub-Saharan Africa	34.4	+6.5	27.9	\$20	+11%	\$18
110	103	↓		Ethiopia	Sub-Saharan Africa	34.3	+5.2	29.1	\$60	+15%	\$52
111	114	↑		Angola	Sub-Saharan Africa	34.2	+6.4	27.7	\$46	+12%	\$41
112	107	↓		Zambia	Sub-Saharan Africa	33.9	+5.1	28.8	\$17	-	-
113	108	↓		Myanmar	Asia	33.9	+5.3	28.6	\$38	-1%	\$39
114	117	↑		Mozambique	Sub-Saharan Africa	33.9	+7.4	26.5	\$13	-	-
115	73	↓		Sri Lanka	Asia	33.8	+2.0	31.8	\$48	+0%	\$49
116	81	↓		Iraq	MENA	33.7	+2.7	31.1	\$68	+9%	\$62
117	106	↓		Laos	Asia	33.6	+4.8	28.9	\$12	-	-
118	120	↑		Trinidad and Tobago	LATAM & Caribbean	33.5	+8.2	25.3	\$15	-	-
119	115	↓		Uganda	Sub-Saharan Africa	33.4	+6.0	27.3	\$32	+22%	\$26
120	111	↓		Guatemala	LATAM & Caribbean	33.3	+5.1	28.2	\$60	+12%	\$53
121	-	New		Zimbabwe	Sub-Saharan Africa	32.7	+32.7	-	\$1	-	-

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Global Soft Power Index | 91-121

Nation Brand	Familiarity	Reputation	Influence	Business & Trade	Governance	International Relations	Culture & Heritage	Media & Communication	Education & Science	People & Values	Sustainability	Medals
	4.2	5.7	3.2	3.5	2.9	3.0	3.5	3.0	2.4	4.0	3.9	-
	4.0	5.4	3.3	3.9	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.0	2.3	3.7	3.9	-
	5.0	5.2	3.5	3.6	2.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	2.1	3.5	3.3	-
	3.5	5.5	3.4	3.7	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.5	3.7	3.8	-
	4.2	5.1	3.5	3.7	2.7	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.4	3.7	3.5	-
	2.8	5.6	3.4	3.8	3.2	3.6	3.1	3.2	2.5	3.7	4.2	-
	4.5	5.2	3.5	3.8	2.5	3.0	2.7	2.8	2.3	3.2	3.5	-
	3.6	5.5	3.4	3.7	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.0	2.3	3.6	3.9	-
	4.9	5.6	3.1	3.4	2.4	2.9	4.2	2.9	2.0	4.2	3.3	-
	4.5	5.4	3.4	3.6	2.6	3.0	3.3	2.8	2.2	3.5	3.6	-
	3.5	5.5	3.4	3.7	2.8	3.2	3.2	3.0	2.4	3.9	3.8	-
	3.9	5.7	3.0	3.7	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.1	2.5	3.9	4.1	-
	3.8	5.4	3.3	3.8	2.8	3.3	3.4	2.9	2.4	3.8	3.6	-
	3.1	5.4	3.2	3.6	3.0	3.4	3.1	3.3	2.7	3.8	4.1	-
	4.0	5.2	3.2	3.6	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.5	3.5	3.9	-
	5.1	4.8	3.6	3.2	2.3	2.8	3.1	2.8	2.1	3.6	3.3	-
	3.5	5.0	3.4	3.7	2.6	3.2	3.3	3.3	2.4	3.5	3.8	-
	3.5	5.4	3.2	3.6	2.9	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.5	3.4	3.9	-
	3.9	5.3	3.2	3.6	2.5	3.2	3.4	2.9	2.3	3.8	3.9	-
	4.2	5.2	3.2	3.5	2.7	3.1	3.4	2.9	2.3	3.5	3.7	-
	3.3	5.2	3.5	3.6	2.7	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.4	3.5	3.7	-
	3.2	5.4	3.2	3.8	2.8	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.7	3.7	-
	3.7	4.9	3.3	3.5	2.7	3.3	2.9	3.2	2.4	3.1	3.7	-
	3.2	5.3	3.3	3.6	2.7	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.4	3.4	3.7	-
	4.3	5.2	3.3	3.4	2.4	2.8	3.2	2.9	2.2	3.4	3.5	-
	6.2	4.6	3.6	2.8	2.1	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.0	2.5	2.9	-
	3.0	5.3	3.3	3.6	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.6	3.4	3.7	-
	2.7	5.4	3.2	3.5	2.8	3.1	3.1	3.2	2.6	3.7	3.7	-
	3.7	5.1	3.2	3.5	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.3	3.5	3.6	-
	3.3	5.2	3.2	3.3	2.6	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.4	3.3	3.8	-
	3.9	5.0	3.1	3.3	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.2	3.5	3.5	-

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